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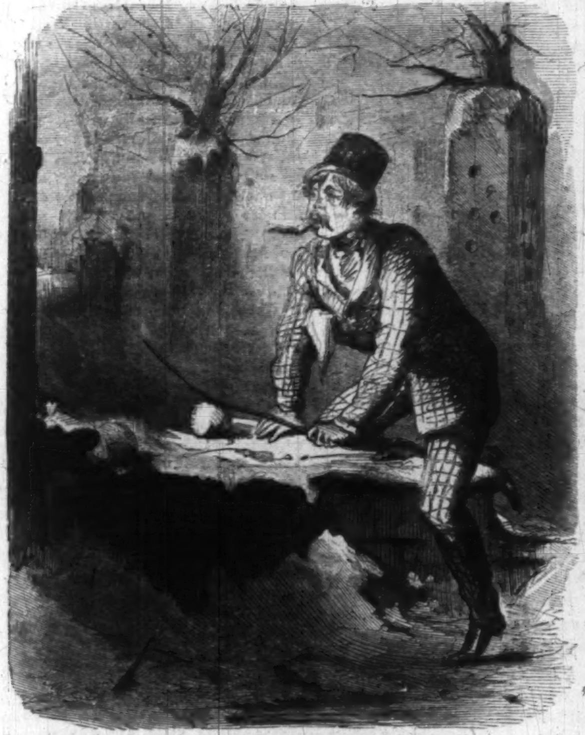

LITTLE FILKINS'S BILLIARDS.

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The New Partner

IN

"CLINGHAM & CO., BANKERS."

BY FITZ HUGH LUDLOW

AUTHOR OF "THE HASHEESH EATER," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

UNDER THE DOG-STAR.—A SIRIUS CHAPTER.

ALL Cheswick said that Clingham & Co. were going to the dogs. In the market of East Cheswick—at the Gold Eagle Tavern of West Cheswick—about the pump where the ore-teams were watered at Cheswick Centre—in Cheswick at all points of the compass and in all varieties of position, was to be heard the time-honored name of Clingham & Co. in connection with that dreadful abandonment to canine clemency aforesaid.

As yet, not in anger was it said; for of all who spread the rumor there was not one who could say that either he or his most remote grandfather had ever lost a cent by the firm. Clingham under various modifications—as combined with Son, or Brother, or Co.—had been coeval probably with the oldest traceable generation of any family now living at Cheswick, and from its first foundation as a firm had done the money business of all the country within a circuit of fifty miles—wisely, reputably, profitably to itself and its customers. So identified was it with the prosperity of the quiet little old town in which it stood, that I have frequently heard one of the first men of the place, Mr. Briggs (since gathered to his fathers), say that the very first object upon which his eye instinctively rested as he looked out of the window upon rising, was the massive stone and iron structure which was the material embodiment of the destinies of Clingham; and upon his perceiving that no earthquake had swallowed that building in the night, he betook himself to his prayers and his toast and coffee with the feeling of a good Christian who has money safely invested and is perfectly satisfied with the dealings of Providence.

As yet Clingham & Co. had had no notes protested, found no difficulty in disposing of their paper on the very best of terms, and gave no external symptoms of failure or dissolution; which fact necessarily, as I have stated, tinctured more with sorrow than with anger the pretty universal asseveration that C. & Co. were verging dogward as fast as time could carry them.

The reason of the asseveration seemed to be this: This being only a branch banking-house, and entirely subordinate to the great head at the metropolis, had never been attended to with any degree of constancy by a member of the celebrated firm in person, but was under the management habitually of some well-tried sub, cashier, teller, or otherwise, who, after a long apprenticeship and trial in the central or some larger branch establishment, had been thought worthy of promotion to a post of command. Such a person, one Luke Green, was now in charge of the Cheswick Clingham, supported by a staff of half a dozen assistants in various grades of honor and trust. Green had never been under the head men immediately; but by regularity of habits, financial alertness, and several adroit services he had rendered the firm as cashier of the Woodstock branch, had so commended himself that when old Tucker died from behind the desk he had elbow-rubbed for thirty years, Green was immediately elevated to his place of Managing Superintendent of the Cheswick Department. Now there was no objection whatever to Green. He was at his post early and left it late; never seemed supervision more eagle-eyed than his; and in his habits, the old lady, who was most attentive to individual morals, and had nothing else to do, could not pick a flaw. But the boys, as they were called—the underlings—ah! there was the trouble—there was grief of heart and cause to the Cheswickians for ill-prophecy in abundance! Now they noticed that the cashier—a good, substantial, and once very promising "boy" of about thirty—came to his desk very late in the morning, somewhat bleared about the eyes, and having a general aspect of up-all-night-ishness which was unfinancial, irresponsible in the extreme. Paying-teller Bradby drove the very rapidest of rapid horses at a speed and an expense hitherto inconceivable in a paying-teller, and somewhat eccentric even in the head of a firm. The various clerks, great and small, without much regard to size or means, devoted their elegant leisure to the investigation of rules of carom or some astute analysis of subtle differences between Mumm and Verzenay — or whatever native compounds occupied their talents under those denominations. In fact, a more goodly fellowship of *dilettante* loafers, to speak the plain, disagreeable truth, could not be found by searching the whole tribe of young persons who affect that style of thing in the American nineteenth century, and being the sons of retired Yankee tradesmen, think it exceedingly English to lounge at tippling places, and say, "Aw! moi de-ah fellaw!"

Now Luke Green, Cheswick Superintendent, like Eli of old, was by no means in the dark as to the doings of these boys of his. Bless you! how could he be? Was it not all over Cheswick when Todds the cashier, in a fit of combined bacchic and patriotic enthusiasm, threw up his window at eleven o'clock of an exceedingly frosty December night, and invited the whole universe to come up stairs and keep Fourth of July with him? And when paying-teller Bradby dashed his trotting sulky to pieces against a stupefied incoming butter-wagon—was there any concealing *that*, or the sling he carried his left arm in (well for him, as Pat the porter said, that it wasn't his head!) for the next three months thereafter? And how could Mr. Luke Green discharge his soul of all acquaintance with the fact that little Filkins, second book-keeper, devoted an unprofitable surplus of his time to brandy-and-water with his billiards, when that young gentleman had awakened him at three o'clock of one morning with the alarm-bell, and informed him, as he came down quite tremulous in his wrapper, that "'f h'ad any r'gard for th' welfare of th' instushun" he had better come out immediately, as somebody had set up another bank in opposition directly next door? Of course there was no such thing as being hoodwinked to these facts. But, like the sacerdotal old gentleman we have before mentioned, Mr. Luke Green felt that boys would be boys, and treated them invariably on the delicate remonstrance principle: "Todds, I regret to hear," etc.; or, "Bradby, really it pains me to learn;" or, "Filkins, you will see the impossibility of this continuing." Really, Cheswick in general did not know what to make of Mr. Green; but it came pretty unanimously to the conclusion, after due debate, that he was altogether too kind-hearted, too sweet-mannered a man to have control of such an important establishment as Clingham & Co., Cheswick Branch. And this was the reason why Cheswick said that Clingham & Co. were going to the dogs.

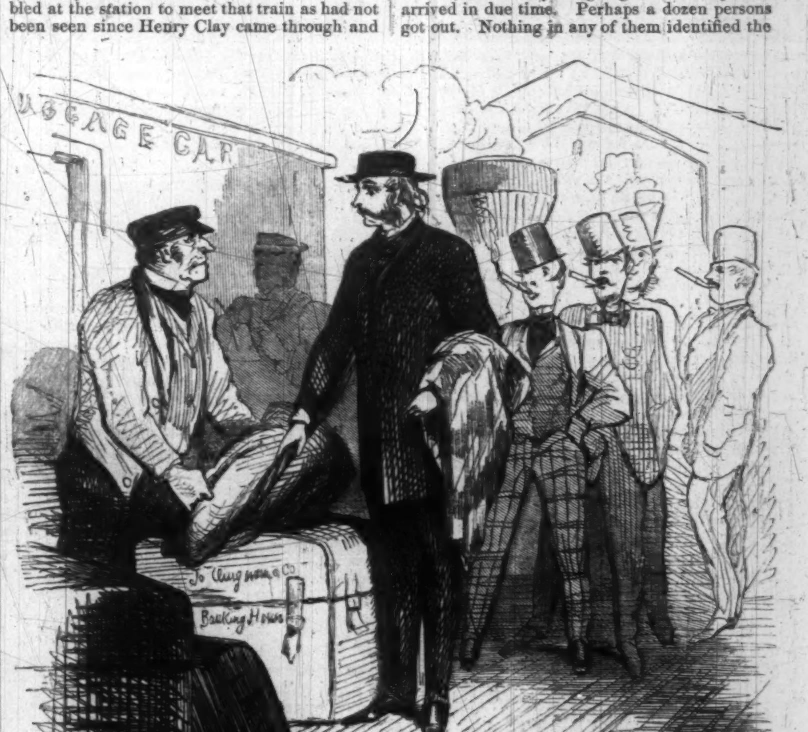
The state of popular opinion at Cheswick could not fail to reach the metropolis, there being facilities for unobstructed land and water carriage between those celebrated places daily. All sorts of remonstrances, complaints, menaces of withdrawal of deposits, suggestions of the antique stocking which had held cash safely before banks were ever thought of, and could do it again—all these, and many more pleasant love-missives, came from Cheswick to the grand central Clingham & Co. which held the reins of destiny; and, as a natural rebound from that state of pressure, rumors began flying Cheswick-ward from the central Clingham, that one of the partners would shortly be up to take charge of the affairs of the branch in person. Cheswick was delighted! Cheswick felt safe! The glory of contemporary children and remote grandsires, the financial bulwark of fifty miles around, was still impregnable; gray-haired men, who had most of their earliest associations and all their stock concentred in that granite building, would still point strangers to it with a proud enthusiasm, saying, "Clingham & Co., Sir! Firm as a rock! Long before I was a boy, Sir!"

It was pretty well known what day the partner would be there. Every one somehow seemed to have settled upon four o'clock P.M. of a Thursday—and there was such a crowd assembled at the station to meet that train as had not been seen since Henry Clay came through and spoke to Cheswick from the platform. But though every one knew the hour, very few seemed to know the man. "It would be old Clingham, probably," remarked a financially very young person. To whom, answering in a voice of intense sarcasm, replied a gentleman of broader monetary experience, "No doubt! He very likely intends to leave New York for *this* place! We shall possibly soon hear of the New York branch of Cheswick!" And through the multitude ran undefined rumors of different other members of the firm; now it was George—now young Sam—now Lawrence Clingham, whose epiphany by railroad was to be expected.

Shifting about among the crowd, hearkening now to this, now to that hearsay, was Mr. Luke Green observable—for at three banking hours closed, and it was now nearly four. Observable—I use that word forcibly—for though I said that he was in the crowd, he certainly was not of it. Among the heaving mass of shoulders and heads he seemed as markedly discernible and separate as a dead body floating on a rocking sea; for in the midst of many flushed, some embrowned, and all pleasurably anxious faces, Mr. Luke Green's was the only white, pallidly white, and immovable one. Ever and anon he looked up the long stretch of track to where it curved out of eyeshot through the rock cut in the distance, as if he devoured the moments till the train should bear in sight; yet he started, just perceptibly, whenever any sound as of a whistle or a rumbling struck his ear. Necessarily, it *was* a trying season for a superintendent—this time of giving up the delegated headmanship to a superior, however delicately it might be received—this becoming once more a subaltern in station, with whatever undiminished continuance or even increase of salary. And not even Mr. Green knew precisely *who* was coming. The only partner he had ever seen was "the old gentleman"—Clingham the head—the great James Clingham; whom, as suggested before with extinguishing sarcasm, it would be impossible to expect unless he intended to make New York a branch.

At easy distances from their superior—easy in all respects, for they looked as if they had not the slightest trouble upon their minds, unless it were the advisableness on *that* afternoon of not getting drunk and playing for drinks to get drunker—lounged the subalterns of Cheswick Branch about the station.

The train—as all trains are almost always sure to, unless they are going to Philadelphia—arrived in due time. Perhaps a dozen persons got out. Nothing in any of them identified the



"SEND THIS UP IMMEDIATELY, IF YOU PLEASE."

man. But the knowing ones, who had posted themselves where the baggage car disgorged its contents, sent down a rumor to the ranks who had formed about the passenger exits, that a trunk was distinctly visible to the naked eye in their field of view, marked "To Clingham & Co.'s Banking House." Immediately afterward reliable report had located a carpet bag with the same destination upon the top of said trunk. Upon which, naturally enough, there was a rush to see who would call for these articles of luggage.

An evident sensation of surprise ran through the crowd as a tall but somewhat slender man, decidedly Saxon in the mould of his features, his bright and almost laughing blue eyes, his light-brown side-whiskers, mustache, and hair, and very young apparently, for no one would have set him down as more than twenty-three or four years old, approached the notable pile above mentioned, and, touching it lightly with his umbrella, said, "Send this up immediately, if you please." The surprise of the crowd was reciprocated by his face—for it flushed a little for a moment to find itself gazed at by so many eyes—and then bowing, as if to acknowledge what was an unmistakable compliment to his coming, he slightly drew himself up with a self-possessed dignity, and passed through the throng, which made room for him, as quietly as though unnoticing and unnoticed. Passed through, leaving even Cheswick quite mute at his unexpected look and bearing—a portion of it disappointed that its appetite for a corpulent man with sharp eyes, seals, gold-headed cane, and decided moneyed appearance was so woefully unsated, and another portion smitten with enthusiasm for the fair-haired young stranger who was so early in life worthy of a momentous trust like Cheswick Branch.

And as he passed away, Todds, cashier, elevated himself to the extreme height of five feet six inches, boot-heels inclusive, and turned to paying teller Bradby with the remark:

"Weally! I'm quoite welived—Demme if I didn't think he was going to be some old muff we'd be afwaid of!"

Todds, cashier, belonged to that species of which there can be no doubt he was, two years ago, the last survivor, and which we may therefore now believe to be wholly extinct—which can not realize such a possibility as feeling reverence for any man or thing which does not knock them down. They wax How-are-ye-old-fellowish with the *man* who has the possibilities to laugh in him—but have a sublime veneration for the dignity of the pump-handle, whose contact floored them during the last lark. Have?—I meant had; for are they not now all extinct? Who of us but knows true dignity by sight? Bah! is the world an ass?

CHAPTER II.

IN WHICH THE COUNTENANCE OF CHESWICK FALLS.

Todds, cashier, seemed not so far from right after all. The terribleness of this new portent in the sky of Cheswick Branch was diminished exceedingly when Cheswick came into the counting-house the next morning; not so much to have its own business attended to as to attend to that of Clingham & Co., and found the tall desk in the back room still occupied by Mr. Luke Green. Since the earliest foundation of Clingham & Co. such a run of custom had not been known. People holding notes which they had thoroughly made up their minds to keep till maturity now rushed to the rail to have them discounted; tradesmen came to make deposits which they were absolutely sure to draw entirely out the next day or the day after that; and every old lady or young gentleman, so fortunate as to possess a dollar bill, approached to have it converted into silver, while they looked through the little picket fence that hedged in the majesty of a real partner. Wretched multitude! basely betrayed, and sensible to the quick that they had been sold for naught when they beheld, shining through the hither windows of the managerial sanctum, the bland face of Mr. Green, reclad in all its former mansuetude, nowise scarified, but emery-polished into a purer refulgency by the hard hand of yesterday's care, and as much of triumph in it as that gentleman could think of permitting to be there, conscientiously gentle as he was, and opposed to the use of all such stimulants as strong emotion. There had been one change, however—one most irritating, perplexing, absolutely inscrutable change. Cheswick, as a great whole, scratched its head and took to considering itself, but could discover no earthly, proper, defensible, adequate reason why this change should have occurred. Little Filkins, second book-keeper to Cheswick Branch, had utterly disappeared; as utterly as if the heaviest of his tremendous ledgers had fallen shut on him when he was between its covers hunting an entry, and locked him up for sad posterity, like Genivra or a pressed blush-rose. Gone entirely, and inexplicably gone was little Filkins, and in his place sat—Oh! that miserable, paltry make-believe—the young man of Saxon face and slender figure, just as quietly as if nothing had happened, and all Cheswick had not been yesterday at the cars to see him come in as the real partner!

The young man at little Filkins's desk could not avoid knowing that his pretensions were detected; that the gilding of yesterday's eventful moment had been entirely rubbed off overnight, so that his actual brass showed through. He could not help hearing how the popular feeling, justly irritated, took sides with his ousted predecessor, and the inquiry "What has little Filkins done?" ran with a wrathful sorrow from murmuring mouth to mouth. He could not help knowing that he was not at all what was wanted; that Cheswick had asked for bread and been given, in him, a pebble-stone of the very grittiest nature to its enamel. But in spite of all these considerations, this young man of twenty-two or three scratched away imperturbably at his books, instead of bursting into tears or being warmed into a generous shame at the displeasure of so many of his elders. And to make matters worse, every now and then as he took breathing-time at the bottom of a column, he looked up from the page and out through the rails, steadily into the faces of his severe jury with a frank, naught-fearing peacefulness, and a half smile about his blue unswerving eyes, which were absolutely intolerable. The most saucy stare of little Filkins, at the time when he had been trusted at the tailor's for a new paletot, and was sauciest, was easily to be put up with compared with this dignified good-humor. And persons who noticed it took occasion to repeat, in a louder and still more antagonistic tone, the inquiry, "What had little Filkins done?"

Two or three of the oldest inhabitants of Cheswick, who, by the mere fact of their being older and able to sit longer in one place and talk longer about one thing than any body else, were, of course, providentially fitted to become counselors upon all difficult subjects, availed themselves of the proper reverence in which they were held to mediate between a justly exasperated public and Mr. Luke Green, in relation to the practical joke which Cheswick had experienced at the hands of Clingham & Co., Central Firm.

On pretense of feeling it important to communicate immediately the fact which had only just been discovered in the *Journal of Commerce* three days before, that South Pompey and Linkumdooly R.R. stocks, held by Cheswick Branch to the extent of fifty shares, had risen ¼ per cent., Mr. Briggs, Mr. Tollogar, and Mr. Dodgers, pushed through the glass door which intervened between an offended Cheswick and Mr. Luke Green.

"The fact is, Mr. Tollogar," said Mr. Green, the worthy addressed having boxed the compass of conversation around to the subject his heart was upon with such unwonted rapidity for him, that he had only consumed an hour on things totally irrelevant, "The fact is, Mr. Tollogar, that Mr. Filkins, deeply as I grieve to say it, was becoming an irresponsible—it being impossible to mar the peace of the absent, I will add, a *reckless* officer for an institution representing such tremendous interests. For a long time it had been represented to me that he spent much time, and large sums of money, at—at what do you call that game with balls and sticks, where you shove, you know?"

Mr. Dodgers with cheerful promptness suggested "Billiards," and then blushed crimson to have been caught in knowing that very improper and frivolous game.

"Billiards! Thank you. That was the thing. At first I hardly believed it, such is my faith in the perfect goodness of men I meet. Indeed I'm afraid; I'm quite a child: but when I discovered Mr. Filkins one night upon my front stoop, shoving snow-balls with his cane, and his only reply on my remonstrating with him was to get out of the way, old fellow! and let him come down on the cushion and carom on the light red, what conclusion was inevitable?"

"Misplaced confidence," said Mr. Briggs, in a homiletic manner.

"Pre-cisely. And when upon my still further interrogating him as to his singular manner, he replied that he had been moistening his clay, I translated that eccentric expression as meaning brandy and water."

"Of course!" rejoined Mr. Dodgers, with lively appreciation, again checking himself directly with visible exaltation of color at his detection in being so expert in the vocabulary of slang.

"The upshot of it all was, that rumors of his behavior reached the Messrs. Clingham; and they, feeling naturally desirous that the welfare of Cheswick Branch, and I may add, Cheswick people, with whom we feel gratefully identified"—Mr. Tollogar bowed for Cheswick people—"should not be imperiled by any such behavior on the part of one of their officers. He was accordingly removed, and—"

"This young person sent up in his room?" put in Mr. Briggs, briskly.

"This young person sent up in his room; you have expressed it."

"And then," said Mr. Tollogar, evidently torn between the conflicting emotions of dislike at asking a very disagreeable and impudent question, and that insatiable love of research which Barnacle of the eye-glass called "wanting to know, you know." "And then—there is—to be—no change—in the—the—management?"

With imperturbable dignity, and bowing low to the representatives of Cheswick, Mr. Green replied that he had yet to learn of any; but when that information arrived, Messrs. Tollogar, Dodgers, and Briggs should be his earliest confidants. Carrying which answer to the outer world, the trio emerged considerably sadder, but in no pre-eminent degree wiser men than they went in.

It is little enough to say that this answer did not satisfy Cheswick. It might not have been intended to. If so, the answer eminently attained its purpose, for all over town the assertion that "Clingham & Co. were going to the dogs," which, like a dyspeptic baby, had been black-dropped and cradled for a day or two, was now taken up again, wakened, dandled, trotted, churned, made blatant to the further verge of lung-capability, and with it sounded the new inquiry, "What had little Filkins done? Necessarily it was impossible for Cheswick to see *what*. Todds, cashier, devoted a great deal of time to the amusement of getting very drunk, though to be sure in a very quiet way ordinarily, and in the bosom of his boarding-house, and came to the bank very late, and was very cross and uncivil. Paying-teller Bradby seemed to spend as much money on sulkies and animals of fabulous time and pedigree, as if he were the son of some Broad Street father washed ashore upon a golden beach by a rapid rise in the tide of his professional train oil. And all the clerks, great and small, seemed at liberty to do very much as they pleased out of bank hours, and to run the whole delightful gamut of pig-blessedness from doing nothing and feeling no sensation from it, up to getting drunk and enjoying it hugely, without a word of reproof upon the subject. While little Filkins, the least disgusting to Cheswick of the whole crew, was singled out to be made an example of peremptorily then, *what had little Filkins done?*

HARPER'S WEEKLY.

Saturday, January 14, 1860.

ANOTHER NEW SERIAL.

We commence in the present number of *Harper's Weekly* the publication of a new Serial Story of American Life, entitled

The New Partner
in
"CLINGHAM & CO., BANKERS."
By FITZ HUGH LUDLOW, ESQ.,
AUTHOR OF THE "HASHEESH EATER," ETC., ETC.

This story will be illustrated by John McLenan, Esq.

We commenced in No. 152 the publication of a new Serial Story by Wilkie Collins, Esq., entitled

The Woman in White;

which is illustrated expressly for this journal by John McLenan, Esq.

The publication of the delicious Story of American Life,

Trumps,

by George W. Curtis, Esq., with Hoppin's Illustrations, was commenced in No. 119 of *Harper's Weekly*.

As *Harper's Weekly* is electrotyped, we can supply the back numbers from the commencement to any person who sends us the money.

THE IDLENESS OF CONGRESS.

More than one of the three months of the short session of Congress has passed and no organization has been effected. Less than fifty working days remain; during which all the appropriation bills of this session and the Post-office Appropriation Bill of last session must be passed, Kansas must be admitted, and whatever measures are taken with regard to Mexico must be adopted. It is almost doubtful whether the business can be got through in the time that is left.

It is hardly necessary to say that the delay is disgraceful to all parties; and more especially to those who, constituting a minority in either section of the Union, refuse to range themselves on either side, and thus prevent an organization.

Passing this over, and taking a practical view of the subject, it seems to be admitted at Washington that none but a Republican can be elected Speaker. We have reason to believe that this is the view of the clearest-headed men among the Democrats. They assume that the party which has a plurality will not, if it can help it, submit to see a man of another party in the chair of the House. We have also reason to believe that some leading men among the Democrats and Southern Opposition would, for the sake of an organization, vote for a Republican Speaker, or for the plurality rule, which would amount to the same thing, provided the Republicans would agree to drop Sherman and concentrate their strength on some Republican who had not indorsed the Helper book.

Under the circumstances this seems the best alternative that is left. The House must be organized in some way or other, and the Republicans will be alone to blame for the non-performance of business, if they refuse to nominate one of their own party whose election the Democrats agree to permit. Where parties are so evenly balanced, compromise is the only feasible course; and this seems the best of all feasible compromises.

TRADE CHANNELS.

There is every year a certain amount of wheat, flour, corn, cornmeal, pork, beef, ashes, and other produce of the field and the forest, which travels from the great producing States of the West to the Atlantic sea-board for sale or shipment to Europe. For all this produce, of whatever kind, Chicago may be regarded as the central Western depôt; Milwaukie and St. Louis being, so to say, sub-depôts, obeying the same laws, in respect to trade channels, as Chicago. Several great railroad lines compete for the business of conveying this produce from Chicago and the sub-depôts to the sea-board—to wit, the Grand Trunk line of Canada, whose harbor is Portland; the New York lines, the Central and Erie, whose harbor is New York; the Pennsylvania and Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne and Chicago lines, whose harbor is Philadelphia; the Baltimore and Ohio, and its connections, whose harbor is Baltimore. Between these several lines the competition is sharp and severe—the more serious as the sea-ports, which form the termini of the rival lines, are fully alive to the importance of securing the business, and take an active and direct share in the contest.

The owners of the Grand Trunk line are so desirous to secure the business that they are carrying produce from Chicago to Portland for little more than one-half what it costs them to do the business; being sustained cordially in the struggle by the Government of Canada, which is largely interested in the road. Pennsylvania is equally alive to the importance of victory in such a fight. Her canals have been sold, and nothing has been left undone by the Legislature to enable the Trunk line through Pittsburgh to compete successfully with its rivals. The Baltimore and Ohio enjoys the entire favor of the Legislatures on which it depends; it has only to ask, and the States are ready to grant any thing in reason; while the city of Baltimore sagaciously lends its aid whenever it becomes necessary.

New York alone holds aloof from the struggle, and while the rival States are straining every nerve to secure the traffic, proposes to initiate a policy which will tend to injure itself and help its rivals. Governor Morgan, in his Message, proposes to toll the railroads of this State, so as to render it impossible for them to compete on equal terms with their rivals in Canada, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Maryland.

The ostensible motive for this proceeding is a desire to make the canals pay.

The facts are that railroads, which are a superior mode of conveyance to canals, have beaten them in this State in the contest for traffic; and Governor Morgan, who, our readers will be astonished to learn, is a New York merchant, proposes to lay such loads on the roads as will once more place them on a level with the canals. The Governor, in a word, belongs to the respectable race of old fogies who think railways are altogether too fast, and must be checked, in the interest of slower and more antiquated conveyances.

We will not discuss the principle of his method. Governor Morgan is the head of the Republican party in this State, and as such—the Republicans being the dominant faction—is an authority too high to be disputed. But we insist, if his plan be adopted, and tolls laid on the railroads, so as to place them on a par with the canals, that the system be carried out fairly and generally. We want to see tolls levied on the railroads for the support of stage-coaches between New York and Albany. If it be right to tax railroads, so as to render the contest between them and the canals equal, the stage-coaches have the same right to protection. We likewise want to see taxes laid on steamers, so as to render the contest between them and sailing craft fair and equal. It would be only right, too, to lay a tax on telegraph lines, for the benefit of the postal revenue, which has been seriously reduced by the competition of the electric telegraph. If the Morgan principles prevail, and each new step in civilization be bound to carry its defunct predecessor on its back, there is no saying where we must stop. If railroads are to pay an indemnity for superseding canals, steam presses should be taxed for the benefit of the old race of hand-pressmen; city railroads should pay something to omnibus proprietors; modern hotels should hand over an annual bonus to old-fashioned taverns; triple-sheet newspapers should be taxed for the benefit of decaying contemporaries; we should all of us pay a trifle for knowing more than our fathers.

We repeat—we don't mean to discuss the principle; we only want to see it fairly carried out. If the Morgan plan of taxing improvements, as such, be the rule of this State, let us know it; and let him who dare venture to suggest any forward step in the march of progress and civilization.

THE LOUNGER.

MOUNT VERNON.

The ladies have done their work, and Mount Vernon now belongs to them. It only remains to raise about a hundred thousand more dollars to have a fund for the support and repairs of the estate. Of the whole sum thus far collected, Mr. Everett has contributed about one-fourth, or nearly seventy thousand dollars: and it would be interesting to know precisely how many subscribers to the fund there have been in the country. The oration of Mr. Everett alone has produced about fifty thousand dollars—and when we remember that it was first delivered only three years ago upon the coming anniversary of Washington's birth, we may safely say that it has produced much larger pecuniary results than any oration ever before spoken. Thus the estate of Mount Vernon becomes a memorial of Mr. Everett as well as of Washington.

Meanwhile the excellent Mr. John Washington seems to have failed, at least there was some such story in the newspapers, and this ought to be satisfactorily explained. Because if he was compelled to sell the estate by reason of his poverty, and received so much more than the mere market value, as real estate, how does he happen to fail just as the money is paid? There is doubtless some mistake in the story which it would be very refreshing to have contradicted.

And now that the work is done, we suppose Mount Vernon will be kept as a kind of sacred park, a national neutral ground, where we may all go and meditate and moralize, and invigorate our mental constitutions by reflections upon the simple, austere heroism of the man we all reverence so deeply and truly that whoever speaks of him in words other than those of panegyric seems to be blaspheming.

Let it be so! Let the gates be opened wide to the North and South and East and West, that we may all stand upon the porch which Rossiter has painted, and look upon the lovely landscape which Mignot has reproduced, and feel as we do so that we stand where our greatest man stood; a man so calm and wise that men of all times and all nations have praised him—who saw so clearly, who judged so justly, who spoke so well, that Time, which dwindles other greatness, only enhances his; and the increasing light, which shows so many gaps in other revered images of the Past, only glorifies him the more.

THE NEW SINGER.

WE Americans take great pleasure in abusing ourselves, and insisting that we are led by the nose in all affairs of art and in literary judgment. Yet there are few greater errors. Some of the most sturdy English literary reputations have been made, and many confirmed, in this country. There is a story, not yet contradicted, that the first full and fair complete edition of Bolingbroke was collected in Philadelphia. The Miscellanies of Carlyle and De Quincey were first issued, as books, in Boston, and England knows much less of Robert Browning than we do. Festus Bailey was first hailed here, but somehow has never come to his crowning; and Martin Farquhar Tupper, A.M., if not LL.D., was idolized by us for at least three years.

Nor is it true that we require the approval of England before we approve our own men. Bancroft, and Hawthorne, and Prescott, and Motley, and Bryant, and Longfellow, and Lowell, and Holmes, and all the rest, we know and like, and have known and liked, whether England did or did not. If she did like and said so, it was certainly pleasant to hear. If she did not, she was at liberty to have her own tastes.

And certainly we have not been deceived by singers or actors. Not even the pronunciamentos of Signor Ullman have persuaded any body to think a bad singer a good one, or even to believe in M. Musard because he had the same name as his father. Even when Grisi came, we knew all about it. New York was much more polite than Madrid, but it recognized quite as clearly that *la Giulia* was no longer *la diva*. But Bosio, with no Europe behind her, charmed because she was charming. Benedetti and Truffi have made the remembrance of one season in Astor Place radiant to many and many a hearer, yet their claims were not countersigned by European repute. And all the faded or worn voices which have been heralded with such blare of puffery, have failed to deceive a solitary hearer.

Now, at last, comes a little lady, with no prestige of any kind—who was heard a few years since as a prodigy, who was not introduced as an angel, or a siren, or a sky-lark, or even as a grand lyric *tragedienne*, but who trips on to the stage and warbles her way straight into the hearts of the hearers and into the very highest position. She is in no other sense an American than that soon after her birth her family removed to this country. But even if she had been a Yankee girl, does any body think she would have been any more or any less successful? Or had she sung as the poor Speranza sung, would her Italian birth and name have saved her?

There was no mistake in our appreciation of Jenny Lind; and whoever supposes Barnum made her career in this country, pays Barnum a great compliment. Barnum's sagacity lay in seeing that so great a singer as Jenny Lind was sure to succeed. Hackett's mistake was in supposing that Grisi, in her decline, would succeed because she had been famous in her prime.

If the Signori Managers will always provide good singers they may save one fortune in printing puffs, and make another by the generous appreciation of the public.

HATS.

Do we owe our emancipation from the "tile" or the stove-pipe continuation to Kossuth, from whom the soft slouch hats are named? It is easy to believe so, for the Magyar race is Oriental in its origin—languid, luxurious; and what is the soft hat truly seen but a mingling of the turban and the hat—the East and the West—poetry, if you please, and prose. At least which of our poets, unless it be Willis in some metropolitan moment, wears a tile?

Yet, on the other hand, before Kossuth came—whose hat was only partially slouched—and in England and on the other continent, the easy hat is called a "wide-awake," certainly the reverse of any Oriental signification. Why wide-awake? Plainly because the wearing of so convenient and comely a covering for the head showed a man wide-awake to common sense and uncommon comfort—a man fully wide-awake to the regnant absurdities of fashion, and who rose early enough in the morning to know fully what he was doing.

See, too, how the head has set the fashion for the rest of the body! Since the highest point of all has been comfortable, how the human form has been emancipated from tight tailoring! With loose hats come loose coats; with loose coats, in due order, peg-top trowsers and ample waistcoats; and so, by developing supposititious proportions, the human form divine is stimulated to make those proportions real. If a man's waistcoat be full-chested, how naturally he resolves to make his chest correspond! If the thighs of his trowsers bulge, how inevitably he will develop the thighs themselves! And all this invigoration and expansion of muscle and lungs—and consequent increase in beauty and grace and health—and corresponding higher flights in the action of the brain, and wider grasp of philanthropic sympathy, all unfolded from the layers of the soft hat, as the conjurer takes out of any old beaver new chickens, fresh butter, and gay ribbons! How clear it is that this hat does come from the East, realm of miracle and mystery!

Think, now, to what perfection this thing is carried! We speak of the improved telescope, of the constant discoveries in the sun-painting arts—of new coffee-pots and of unimaginable preserved meats that might be laid away in a pyramid, and taken out three thousand centuries hence and cooked into delicious freshness of flavor by the New Zealander who is to sit and moralize upon the ruins of the City Hall or the Post-office. That is all well; but what do you think of a hat packed into an envelope and sent by mail; then taken out and unfolded into airy symmetry, so that you seem to wear a sunset cloud, for lightness; a brazen casque, for strength; and your own skin, for comfort!

Of course there are cavilers. There are people who assert that your stove-pipe is the only respectability, and who, as they survey the luxurious fullness of fashionable drapery and tailoring, declare, cynically, that Clarendon has already told us how vice in the head goes through all the state; and that every layer of society is corrupted when the top layer is tainted.

Aristo va! The slouch hat is practical democracy—namely, comfort and beauty. It is the symbol of the free and easy brain beneath. It is the connecting link between the oldest and newest civilizations; the ease that was sloth in the extreme East, and is intense life in the extreme West.

So no more at present about the slouch hat.

WHAT A NEWSPAPER IS, AND IS NOT.

IT is very natural to suppose that a man publishes a newspaper to benefit his fellow-men, as it is to believe that great poets sing for the pleasure of singing, and that novelists write for the pleasure of telling stories. The practical comment of experience upon this supposition is very incessant and very amusing, especially in the case of publishers and editors. Let the Lounger have a word with his many friends about it.

There are, probably, not a dozen papers in the country published at a positive loss for the sake of maintaining a principle. And it is a good thing that there are not; for, until a principle and its friends can support an organ, it has not yet really any need of an organ. It should be inculcated orally, and at individual expense.

But when periodicals are established, not as moral or other organs or agents, but simply as business enterprises, then they are to be managed like all other business. You have no more right to expect peculiar generosity or self-sacrifice of the man who undertakes it than of a man who engages in shoemaking or cotton manufacturing. The object in all the cases is individual advantage. The proprietors, indeed, do not intend to outrage honesty or decency; on the contrary, they may have no doubt that honesty and decency pay; but their motive is not the interests of those two qualities, but their own private and especial advantage.

Among the attractions of the paper, let us suppose, is a brief and conspicuous advertising page. We will suppose the rates to be high, because it is the general habit to read well-printed and commanding advertisements. Now the theory is, and it is a perfectly just mercantile theory, that the money received for the advertisement is properly and fully balanced by its publication and the notice consequently attracted to the wares. The account is square. Mr. Smith brings the quality of his bug-powder plainly before the public, and Mr. Jones his exquisite edition of "Lalla Rookh."

Now imagine the polite Jones approaching the editor and saying that he has inserted an advertisement of his book, and paid for it, *and* would like an editorial notice! But an editorial notice is the most conspicuous and important of all advertisements; so that the editor can only reply, "Why should I *give* you more than Mr. Smith has *paid* for? and how long do you suppose I shall keep my other advertisers if I favor two or three, to the exclusion of all? On the other hand, if I give a notice to all, what is the value of my notice? It is soon seen to be only a part of the advertisement, and my editorial opinion has lost all its importance. If an advertisement in my columns is not worth the money you pay for it, you can, of course, cease to pay it at any moment. Also, please to take notice that it is only space in my paper, not my opinions, which is for sale. You may buy the room to announce your splendid edition of "Lalla Rookh;" but if you wish me to speak of it editorially, how if I chance to think that it is fustian and rubbish, and say so? Or do you propose to pay me roundly for saying that, upon the whole, Tommy Moore is superior to Milton?"

That is what every editor may justly say to advertisers who wish "a notice." He must be impartial, and treat all his friends alike. If, indeed, any work upon an important or interesting subject be issued, he will naturally speak of it in connection with a topic which concerns every body; but in so doing he will not make his notice of the subject a puff of the publisher of the book.

What is true of books is true of every thing else. No sensible editor, of course, will omit to speak of the beautiful bindings (for instance) of beautiful books, if he thinks it to be an affair of real interest, or as showing improvement or unusual excellence; but the point is, that part of his capital as a sagacious editor is a power of just discrimination, and a perfect willingness to say No to every body who wants his own axe ground, upon the claim that every body is interested in that particular edge.

And if all this be true of an editor and a proprietor, think of a mere Lounger, and what is true of him!

THE LOUNGER'S LETTER-BOX.

—J. B. Thanks for your "Thoughts." They are pointed and racy. The Lounger has handed them to the Easy Chair, who promises to give some of them room, and to talk with you about them.

—F. A. The Lounger has read the lines. They are full of kind feeling; but are they poetry? As intention, the Lounger considers them "favorably," but he can not do so as performance.

—LILY DALE. The lines are respectfully declined.

The Lounger's correspondents are exhorted to be patient. Questions asked several months since will yet be answered.

—OLD SWISS says:

"1. There is no such town as *Schabzieger* in Germany.

"2. '*Schabzieger käse*' derives from the German verb *Schaben*, to grate; *zieger käse* means sour cheese.

"3. 'Schabzieger käse,' or sape sago cheese, is made nowhere else than in the Canton *Glaris*, in Switzerland, on whose mountains alone are found the Alpine plants necessary to the manufacturing and to the particular flavor of the Schabzieger käse."

—BOCCHORIS. Now that the Atlantic wire has been laid and found practicable for the transmission of messages, the project of a line *via* Behring's Straits will hardly be discussed. An Atlantic wire will doubtless be laid until it works.

Father Prout's Inaugurative Ode

TO THE AUTHOR OF "VANITY FAIR."

[*From the first number of Thackeray's "Cornhill Magazine."*]

I.

OURS is a faster, quicker age:
Yet erst at Goldsmith's homely Wakefield Vicarage,
While Lady Blarney from the West End glozes
Mid the Primroses,
Fudge! cries Squire Thornhill,
Much to the wonder of young greenhorn Moses,
Such word of scorn ill
Matches the "Wisdom Fair" thy whim proposes
To hold on Cornhill.

II.

With Fudge, or Blarney, or the "Thames on Fire!"
Treat not thy buyer;
But proffer good material—
A genuine Cereal,
Value for twelvepence, and not dear at twenty.
Such wit replenishes thy Horn of Plenty.

III.

Nor wit alone dispense,
But sense:
And with thy sparkling Xerez
Let us have Ceres.
Of loaf thou hast no lack,
Nor set, like Shakspeare's zany, forth,
With lots of sack,
Of bread one pennyworth.

IV.

Sprightly, and yet sagacious,
Funny, yet farinaceous,
Dashing, and yet methodical—
So may thy periodical,
On this auspicious morn,
Exalt its horn,
Thron'd on the Hill of Corn!

V.

Of aught that smacks of sect, surplice, or synod,
Be thy grain winnow'd!
Nor deign to win our laugh
With empty chaff.
Shun aught o'er which dullard or bigot gloats;
Nor seek our siller
With meal from Titus Oates
Or flour of Joseph Miller.

VI.

There's corn in Egypt still
(Pilgrim from Cairo to Cornhill!),
Give each his fill.
But all comers among
Treat best the young;
Fill the big brothers' knapsacks from thy bins,
But slip the Cup of Love in Benjamin's.

VII.

Next as to those
Who bring their lumbering verse or ponderous prose
To where good Smith and Elder
Have so long held their
Well garnish'd Cornhill storehouse—
Bid them not bore us,
Tell them instead
To take their load next street, the Hall of Lead!

VIII.

Only one word besides—
As he who tanneth hides
Stocketh with proper implements his tannery:
So thou, Friend! do not fail
To store a stout corn flail,
Ready for use, within thy Cornhill granary.
Of old there walked abroad,
Prompt to right wrongs, Calif Haroun al Raschid:
Deal thus with Fraud,
Or Job or Humbug—thrash it!

IX.

Courage, old Friend! long found
Firm at thy task, nor in fix'd purpose fickle:
Up! choose thy ground,
Put forth thy shining sickle:
Shun the dense underwood
Of Dunce or Dunderhood:
But reap North, South, East, Far West,
The world-wide Harvest!

A STAG HUNT AT COMPIEGNE.

WE print on the following page an engraving which represents the Emperor and Empress of the French at a stag-hunt at Compiègne. As the sport is not familiar to many of our readers, we give the following account of it from the pen of an American who was an invited guest at the Imperial residence:

"At an early hour on the morning of the eventful day I was up, and was allowed, through the kindness of a friend who belongs to his Majesty's household, to visit the stables and kennels. I admired the horses, and after having proved by some profound horse-talk that I knew all about the merits of those useful quadrupeds, I expressed a desire to become better acquainted with the hounds that were to chase the stag.

"I entered the large house used as a kennel for the pack with some misgivings, having a lively recollection of a misadventure in the Imperial kennels at Fontainebleau, on which occasion the wind blew the door to, leaving me alone with the pack, one of which—an ugly, old, one-eyed dog—evinced a savage desire to come to close quarters, very much to my intense disgust and to the unkind amusement of the keeper, who came in just in time to prevent my becoming dog-meat—a sad fate, even if the dogs be those of his Imperial Majesty. On this occasion, however, I suffered no inconvenience, save a renewed feeling of disgust in recognizing old one-eye.

"The Imperial kennel contains one hundred English dogs and twenty-five blood-hounds, the latter being French dogs, belonging to the breed called 'Briguet d'Artois.'

"The *personnel* of the hunt consists of the *veneurs* or huntsmen, whose duty is to attend to the hounds, and the *cheps d'ecurie* and grooms who have charge of the horses. The *veneurs* are of two classes: those of the first class are mounted (*valets de chien a cheval*), those of the second class are on foot (*valets de chien apied*).

"Having visited the house and dogs, I started to meet my friend at the chateau, and found him in all the glory of his hunting-suit, which is that of the reign of Louis XV. While speaking of the magnificence of his appearance, it all at once flashed across my mind that I had no such a hunting costume, and that I could not appear at the hunt except only attired *à la* Louis XV. Here was an embarrassment—I had a horse, but no costume. My friend kindly undertook to procure me one, and finally succeeded in borrowing the hunting-suit of one of his companions who was not to accompany the hunt. He triumphantly bore back to me the much-desired garment, which I at once donned, meeting with no difficulty in so doing, as its owner is at least six feet high and large in proportion, while I am a small man.

"I was determined to witness the hunt, however, and the size of my costume could not deter me.

"At about noon the cavalcade left the chateau for the meet in the forest, and most splendidly did it look.

"The Emperor and Empress rode along, side by side, in front; near their Majesties was Prince Metternich, who rode by the side of General Fleury, the Emperor's favorite aid-de-camp.

"The Empress looked most beautiful in her natty and most becoming costume, while the lovely Princess Anna Murat attracted universal admiration.

"I shall not attempt giving you the names of all the beautiful ladies present, contenting myself with reiterating that the cavalcade that started from the chateau Compiègne to the meet in the forest was a most brilliant one.

"Arrived at the meet, we found the hunting horses and the dogs ready, while the *veneurs* were anxious to begin what they call sport. I thought of the Wisconsin and Iowa prairies; of stags that I had hunted and killed in those prairies; and I looked upon the present hunting with feelings of good-natured superiority. Some time elapsed ere the hunters could all be suitably mounted, while the ladies, of course, required unusual looking after.

"I observed that the Emperor was particularly attentive as to the secure fastening of the Empress's saddle, taking hold of it himself to assure its safety. At last all were mounted and were ready, and at a sign from the grand *veneurs*, away went the dogs, horses, and consequently Majesties and guests.

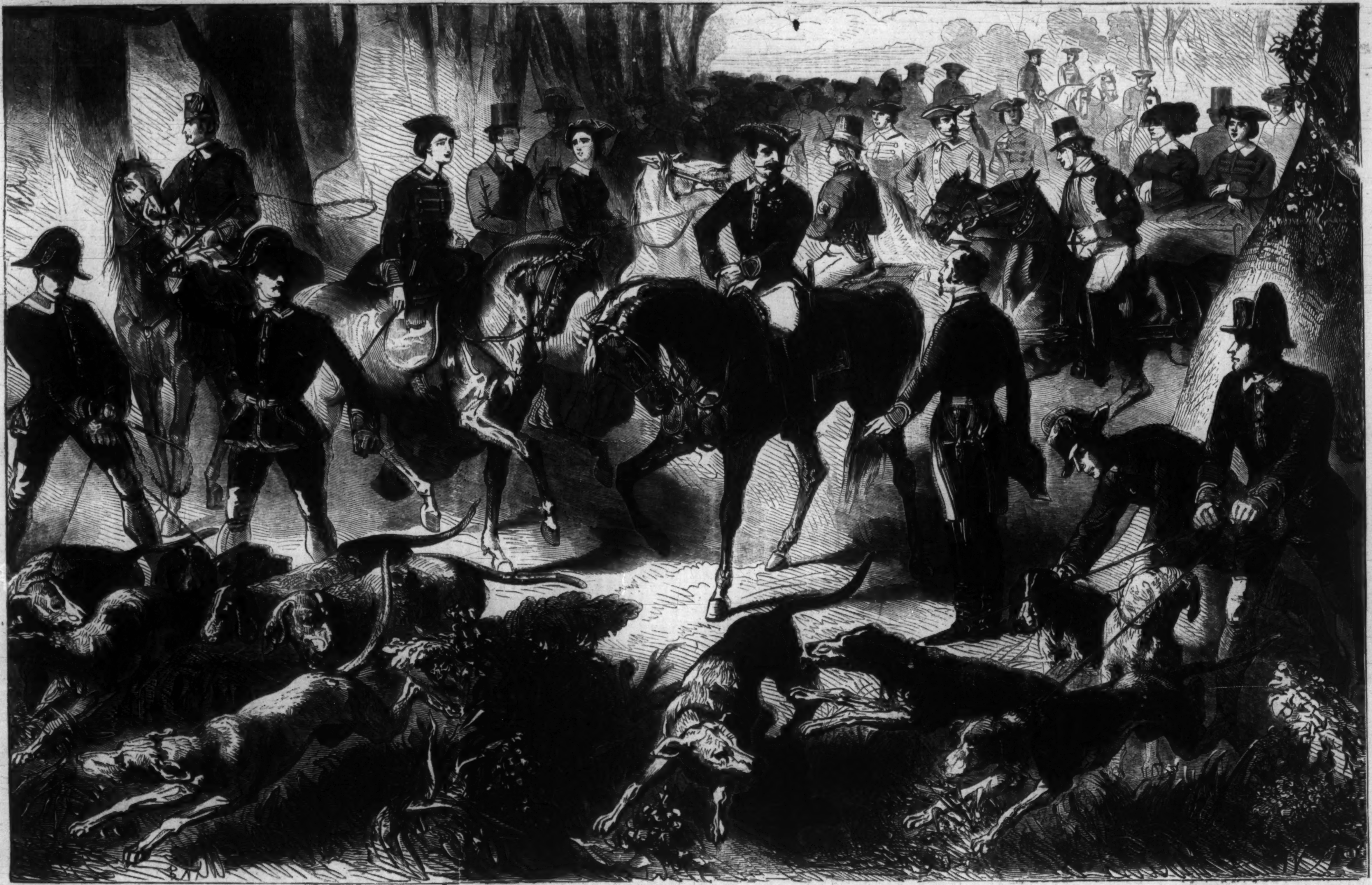
"What a magnificent sight was this start! The bright rays of the sun gave increased splendor to the glittering gold-lace adorned costumes, while the barking of the dogs and the quick tramp of the horses made me forget, in the excitement of the moment, the unpleasant fact of my being lost in the folds of my voluminous hunting suit.

"In less time than I could recount it the hunters and dogs had disappeared, and I remained striving and struggling with my obstinate brute of a horse that would not go, but kept backing and turning round and round, with a degree of composure that rendered me frantic. I was taken at a disadvantage by the beast of a horse, owing to the large size of my trowsers and the fact that my coat covered me up, so as to almost deprive me of the use of my limbs. But Yankee ingenuity is hard to beat; and by gently striking my penknife into the horse I started him off at a pace that soon brought us up with the foremost of the riders, and which was kept up, until I was far in advance of the hunt, and lost in the mazes of a forest totally unknown to me. Having accomplished this feat, my horse became more reasonable, and I managed to stop him.

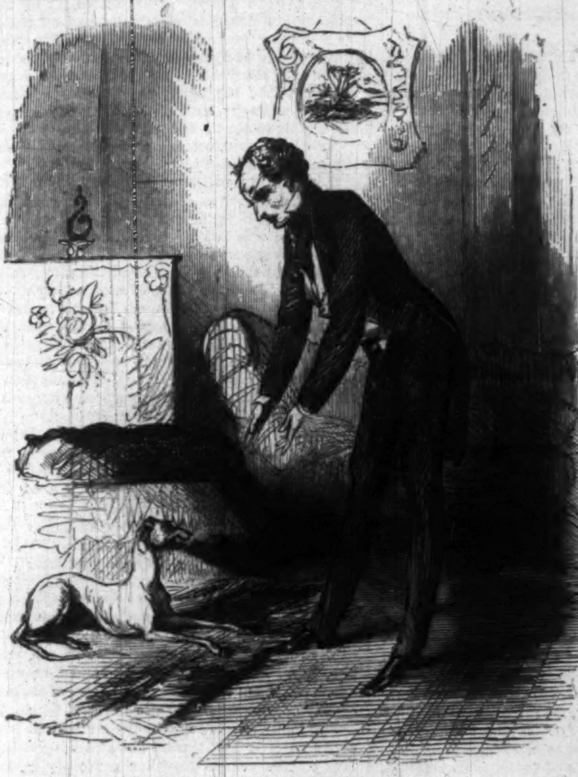
"I had not waited long ere I heard the horns off in the distance, and was enabled thus to rejoin the hunting party once more. Doing so I met with the following adventure: Galloping up an avenue, I saw before me a hunter who was slowly walking his horse, and whose head was bent forward in a reflective mood. Fired with the ardor of the chase, I dashed toward the recreant hunter, prepared to shout as I passed a loud 'tallyho!' or something to that effect, for the purpose of arousing him to a consciousness of the hunt that was going on. This resolve was somewhat changed by my recognizing, as I neared the hunter, that it was no less a personage than Napoleon III., Emperor of the French.

"As I emerged from the avenue a sight met my gaze that brought me to a stand-still at once. You will perhaps imagine that 'twas a fine ten-antlered stag at bay, surrounded by the fiercest of the pack, or that these same fiercest were pulling down the stag they had just overtaken. No; 'twas a fine long table covered with a most succulent lunch, and many, very many bottles of wine, some of which had the peculiar long neck observable in Champagne bottles. I at once felt my ardor for the chase oozing at every pore, and I gladly consigned my horse to the nearest servant.

"Not far from the table I have mentioned was a smaller one reserved for their Majesties, and those they might invite to partake of their lunch. I observed, as a curious coincidence, that just about this time almost all the hunters, male and female, arrived at the place I had so unexpectedly discovered, and that soon no vestige of the lunch remained—violent exercise does give one such an excellent appetite. After a brief repose the hunt began again, and by five o'clock the dogs succeeded in running down a fine stag, which was carried to the chateau at Compiègne for the *curée*, which was to take place in the court-yard of the castle. This ceremony is neither more nor less than skinning the beast, which is done by the light of bonfires, and while the bands of the regiments are discoursing sweet music."



THE EMPEROR AND EMPRESS OF FRANCE HUNTING AT COMPIEGNE.—[SEE PRECEDING PAGE.]



"THE LITTLE BEAST, COWARDLY AND CROSS-GRAINED AS PET DOGS USUALLY ARE, LOOKED UP SHARPLY," ETC.

THE WOMAN IN WHITE.

BY WILKIE COLLINS.

AUTHOR OF "THE DEAD SECRET," "AFTER DARK," ETC., ETC.

[Printed from advance proof-sheets purchased from the author exclusively for "Harper's Weekly."]

THE NARRATIVE OF VINCENT GILMORE, SOLICITOR, OF CHANCERY-LANE, LONDON.

I.

I WRITE these lines at the request of my friend, Mr. Walter Hartright. They are intended to convey a description of certain events which seriously affected Miss Fairlie's interests, and which took place after the period of Mr. Hartright's departure from Limmeridge House.

There is no need for me to say whether my own opinion does or does not sanction the disclosure of the remarkable family story, of which my narrative forms an important component part. Mr. Hartright has taken that responsibility on himself; and circumstances yet to be related will show that he has amply earned the right to do so, if he chooses to exercise it. The plan he has adopted for presenting the story to others, in the most truthful and most vivid manner, requires that it should be told, at each successive stage in the march of events, by the persons who were directly concerned in those events at the time of their occurrence. My appearance here, as narrator, is the necessary consequence of this arrangement. I was present during the sojourn of Sir Percival Glyde in Cumberland, and was personally concerned in one important result of his short residence under Mr. Fairlie's roof. It is my duty, therefore, to add these new links to the chain of events, and to take up the chain itself at the point where, for the present only, Mr. Hartright has dropped it.

I arrived at Limmeridge House, on a Friday in the week, either at the end of October or the beginning of November—it is not material to my present purpose to say precisely which.

My object was to remain at Mr. Fairlie's until the arrival of Sir Percival Glyde. If that event led to the appointment of any given day for Sir Percival's union with Miss Fairlie, I was to take the necessary instructions back with me to London, and to occupy myself in drawing the lady's marriage settlement.

On the Friday I was not favored by Mr. Fairlie with an interview. He had been, or had fancied himself to be, an invalid for years past; and he was not well enough to receive me. Miss Halcombe was the first member of the family whom I saw. She met me at the house-door; and introduced me to Mr. Hartright, who had been staying at Limmeridge for some time past.

I did not see Miss Fairlie until later in the day at dinner-time. She was not looking well, and I was sorry to observe it. She is a sweet, lovable girl, as amiable and attentive to every one about her as her excellent mother used to be—though, personally speaking, she takes after her father. Mrs. Fairlie had dark eyes and hair; and her elder daughter, Miss Halcombe, strongly reminds me of her. Miss Fairlie played to us in the evening—not so well as usual, I thought. We had a rubber at whist; a mere profanation, so far as play was concerned, of that noble game. I had been favorably impressed by Mr. Hartright on our first introduction to one another; but I soon discovered that he was not free from the social failings incidental to his age. There are three things that none of the young men of the present generation can do. They can't sit over their wine; they can't play at whist; and they can't pay a lady a compliment. Mr. Hartright was no exception to the general rule. Otherwise, even in those early days and on that short acquaintance, he struck me as being a modest and gentleman-like young man.

So the Friday passed. I say nothing about the more serious matters which engaged my attention on that day—the anonymous letter to Miss Fairlie; the measures I thought it right to adopt when the matter was mentioned to me; and the conviction I entertained that every possible explanation of the circumstances would be readily afforded by Sir Percival Glyde, having all been fully noticed, as I understand, in the narrative which precedes this.

On the Saturday Mr. Hartright had left before I got down to breakfast. Miss Fairlie kept her room all day; and Miss Halcombe appeared to me to be out of spirits. The house was not what it used to be in the time of Mr. and Mrs. Philip Fairlie. I took a walk by myself in the forenoon; and looked about at some of the places which I first saw when I was staying at Limmeridge to transact family business, more than thirty years since. They were not what they used to be either.

At two o'clock Mr. Fairlie sent to say he was well enough to see me. *He* had not altered, at any rate, since I first knew him. His talk was to the same purpose as usual—all about himself and his ailments, his wonderful coins, and his matchless Rembrandt etchings. The moment I tried to speak of the business that had brought me to his house he shut his eyes and said I "upset" him. I persisted in upsetting him by returning again and again to the subject. All I could ascertain was that he looked on his niece's marriage as a settled thing, that her father had sanctioned it, that he sanctioned it himself, that it was a desirable marriage, and that he should be personally rejoiced when the worry of it was over. As to the settlement, if I would consult his niece, and afterward dive as deeply as I pleased into my own knowledge of the family affairs, and get every thing ready, and limit his share in the business, as guardian, to saying Yes at the right moment—why, of course, he would meet my views, and every body else's views, with infinite pleasure. In the mean time, there I saw him, a helpless sufferer, confined to his room. Did I think he looked as if he wanted teasing? No. Then why tease him?

I might, perhaps, have been a little astonished at this extraordinary absence of all self-assertion on Mr. Fairlie's part, in the character of guardian, if my knowledge of the family affairs had not been sufficient to remind me that he was a single man, and that he had nothing more than a life-interest in the Limmeridge property. As matters stood, therefore, I was neither surprised nor disappointed at the result of the interview. Mr. Fairlie had simply justified my expectations—and there was an end of it.

Sunday was a dull day, out of doors and in. A letter arrived for me from Sir Percival Glyde's solicitor, acknowledging the receipt of my copy of the anonymous letter, and my accompanying statement of the case. Miss Fairlie joined us in the afternoon, looking pale and depressed, and altogether unlike herself. I had some talk with her, and ventured on a delicate allusion to Sir Percival. She listened, and said nothing. All other subjects she pursued willingly, but this subject she allowed to drop. I began to doubt whether she might not be repenting of her engagement—just as young ladies often do, when repentance comes too late.

On Monday Sir Percival Glyde arrived.

I found him to be a most prepossessing man, so far as manners and appearance were concerned. He looked rather older than I had expected; his head being bald over the forehead, and his face somewhat marked and worn. But his movements were as active and his spirits as high as a young man's. His meeting with Miss Halcombe was delightfully hearty and unaffected; and his reception of me, upon my being presented to him, was so easy and pleasant that we got on together like old friends. Miss Fairlie was not with us when he arrived, but she entered the room about ten minutes afterward. Sir Percival rose and paid his compliments with perfect grace. His evident concern on seeing the change for the worse in the young lady's looks was expressed with a mixture of tenderness and respect, with an unassuming delicacy of tone, voice, and manner, which did equal credit to his good breeding and his good sense. I was rather surprised, under these circumstances, to see that Miss Fairlie continued to be constrained and uneasy in his presence, and that she took the first opportunity of leaving the room again. Sir Percival neither noticed the restraint in her reception of him, nor her sudden withdrawal from our society. He had not obtruded his attentions on her while she was present, and he did not embarrass Miss Halcombe by any allusion to her departure when she was gone. His tact and taste were never at fault on this or on any other occasion while I was in his company at Limmeridge House.

As soon as Miss Fairlie had left the room he spared us all embarrassment on the subject of the anonymous letter by adverting to it of his own accord. He had stopped in London on his way from Hampshire; had seen his solicitor; had read the documents forwarded by me; and had traveled on to Cumberland, anxious to satisfy our minds by the speediest and the fullest explanation that words can convey. On hearing him express himself to this effect, I offered him the original letter which I had kept for his inspection. He thanked me, and declined to look at it; saying that he had seen the copy, and that he was quite willing to leave the original in our hands.

The statement itself, on which he immediately entered, was as simple and satisfactory as I had all along anticipated it would be.

Mrs. Catherick, he informed us, had, in past years, laid him under some obligations for faithful services rendered to his family connections and to himself. She had been doubly unfortunate in being married to a husband who had deserted her, and in having an only child whose mental faculties had been in a disturbed condition from a very early age. Although her marriage had removed her to a part of Hampshire far distant from the neighborhood in which Sir Percival's property was situated, he had taken care not to lose sight of her; his friendly feeling toward the poor woman, in consideration of her past services, having been greatly strengthened by his admiration of the patience and courage with which she supported her calamities. In course of time, the symptoms of mental affliction in her unhappy daughter increased to such a serious extent, as to make it a matter of necessity to place her under proper medical care. Mrs. Catherick herself recognized this necessity; but she also felt the prejudice common to persons occupying her respectable station, against allowing her child to be admitted, as a pauper, into a public Asylum. Sir Percival had respected this prejudice, as he respected honest independence of feeling in any rank of life; and had resolved to mark his grateful sense of Mrs. Catherick's early attachment to the interests of himself and his family, by defraying the expense of her daughter's maintenance in a trust-worthy private Asylum. To her mother's regret and to his own regret, the unfortunate creature had discovered the share which circumstances had induced him to take in placing her under restraint, and had conceived the most intense hatred and distrust of him in consequence. To that hatred and distrust—which had expressed itself in various ways in the Asylum—the anonymous letter written, after her escape, was plainly attributable. If Miss Halcombe's or Mr. Gilmore's recollection of the document did not confirm that view, or if they wished for any additional particulars about the Asylum (the address of which he mentioned, as well as the names and addresses of the two doctors on whose certificates the patient was admitted), he was ready to answer any question and to clear up any uncertainty. He had done his duty to the unhappy young woman, by instructing his solicitor to spare no expense in tracing her, and in restoring her once more to medical care; and he was now only anxious to do his duty toward Miss Fairlie and toward her family, in the same plain, straightforward way.

I was the first to speak in answer to this appeal. My own course was plain to me. It is the great beauty of the Law that it can dispute any human statement, made under any circumstances, and reduced to any form. If I had felt professionally called upon to set up a case against Sir Percival Glyde, on the strength of his own explanation, I could have done so beyond all doubt. But my duty did not lie in this direction: my function was of the purely judicial kind. I was to weigh the explanation we had just heard; to allow all due force to the high reputation of the gentleman who offered it; and to decide honestly whether the probabilities, on Sir Percival's own showing, were plainly with him, or plainly against him. My own conviction was that they were plainly with him; and I accordingly declared that his explanation was, to my mind, unquestionably a satisfactory one.

Miss Halcombe, after looking at me very earnestly, said a few words, on her side, to the same effect—with a certain hesitation of manner, however, which the circumstances did not seem to me to warrant. I am unable to say, positively, whether Sir Percival noticed this or not. My opinion is that he did; seeing that he pointedly resumed the subject, although he might, now, with all propriety, have allowed it to drop.

"If my plain statement of facts had only been addressed to Mr. Gilmore," he said, "I should consider any further reference to this unhappy matter as unnecessary. I may fairly expect Mr. Gilmore, as a gentleman, to believe me on my word; and when he has done me that justice, all discussion of the subject between us has come to an end. But my position with a lady is not the same. I owe to her, what I would concede to no man alive—*a proof* of the truth of my assertion. You can not ask for that proof, Miss Halcombe; and it is therefore my duty to you, and still more to Miss Fairlie, to offer it. May I beg that you will write at once to the mother of this unfortunate woman—to Mrs. Catherick—to ask for her testimony in support of the explanation which I have just offered to you?"

I saw Miss Halcombe change color, and look a little uneasy. Sir Percival's suggestion, politely as it was expressed, appeared to her, as it appeared to me, to point, very delicately, at the hesitation which her manner had betrayed a moment or two since.

"I hope, Sir Percival, you don't do me the injustice to suppose that I distrust you," she said, quickly.

"Certainly not, Miss Halcombe. I make my proposal purely as an act of attention to *you*. Will you excuse my obstinacy if I still venture to press it?"

He walked to the writing-table as he spoke; drew a chair to it; and opened the paper-case.

"Let me beg you to write the note," he said, "as a favor to *me*. It need not occupy you more than a few minutes. You have only to ask Mrs. Catherick two questions. First, if her daughter was placed in the Asylum with her knowledge and approval. Secondly, if the share I took in the matter was such as to merit the expression of her gratitude toward myself? Mr. Gilmore's mind is at ease on this unpleasant subject; and your mind is at ease—pray set my mind at ease also, by writing the note."

"You oblige me to grant your request, Sir Percival, when I would much rather refuse it." With those words Miss Halcombe rose from her place, and went to the writing-table. Sir Percival thanked her, handed her a pen, and then walked away toward the fire-place. Miss Fairlie's little Italian greyhound was lying on the rug. He held out his hand, and called to the dog good-humoredly.

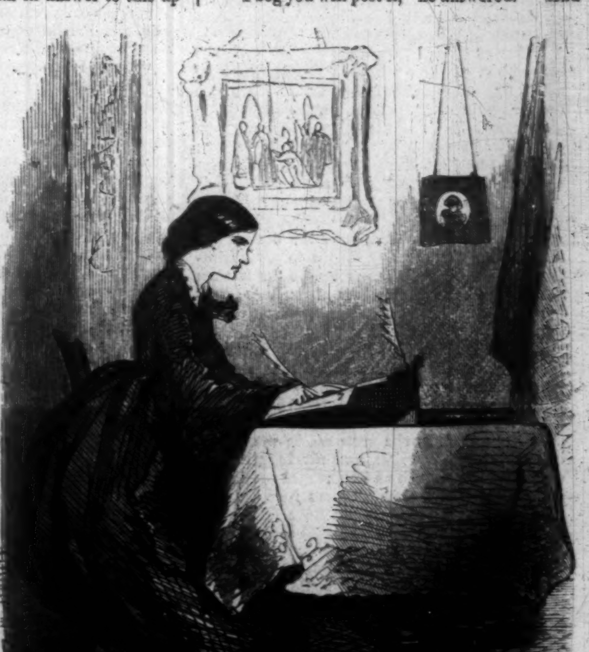
"Come, Nina," he said; "we remember each other, don't we?"

The little beast, cowardly and cross-grained as pet dogs usually are, looked up at him sharply, shrank away from his outstretched hand, whined, shivered, and hid itself under a sofa. It was scarcely possible that he could have been put out by such a trifle as a dog's reception of him—but I observed, nevertheless, that he walked away toward the window very suddenly.

Miss Halcombe was not long in writing the note. When it was done, she rose from the writing-table, and handed the open sheet of paper to Sir Percival. He bowed; took it from her; folded it up immediately, without looking at the contents; sealed it; wrote the address; and handed it back to her in silence. I never saw any thing more gracefully or more becomingly done in my life.

"You insist on my posting this letter, Sir Percival?" said Miss Halcombe.

"I beg you will post it," he answered. "And



"MISS HALCOMBE WAS NOT LONG IN WRITING THE NOTE."

now that it is written and sealed up, allow me to ask one or two last questions about the unhappy woman to whom it refers. I have read the communication which Mr. Gilmore kindly addressed to my solicitor, describing the circumstances under which the writer of the anonymous letter was identified. But there are certain points to which that statement does not refer. Did Anne Catherick see Miss Fairlie?"

"Certainly not," replied Miss Halcombe.

"Did she see you?"

"No."

"She saw nobody from the house, then, except a certain Mr. Hartright, who accidentally met with her in the church-yard here?"

"Nobody else."

"Mr. Hartright was employed at Limmeridge as a drawing-master, I believe? Is he a member of one of the Water-Color Societies?"

"I believe he is," answered Miss Halcombe.

He paused for a moment, as if he was thinking over the last answer, and then added:

"Did you find out where Anne Catherick was living when she was in this neighborhood?"

"Yes. At a farm on the moor, called Todd's Corner."

"It is a duty we all owe to the poor creature herself to trace her," continued Sir Percival. "She may have said something at Todd's Corner which may help us to find her. I will go there, and make inquiries on the chance. In the mean time, as I can not prevail on myself to discuss this painful subject with Miss Fairlie, may I beg, Miss Halcombe, that you will kindly undertake to give her the necessary explanation, deferring it of course until you have received the reply to that note."

Miss Halcombe promised to comply with his request. He thanked her—nodded pleasantly—and left us, to go and establish himself in his own room. As he opened the door, the cross-grained greyhound poked out her sharp muzzle from under the sofa, and barked and snapped at him.

"A good morning's work, Miss Halcombe," I said, as soon as we were alone. "Here is an anxious day well ended already."

"Yes," she answered; "no doubt. I am very glad your mind is satisfied."

"*My* mind! Surely, with that note in your hand, your mind is at ease too?"

"Oh yes—how can it be otherwise? I know the thing could not be," she went on, speaking more to herself than to me; "but I almost wish Walter Hartright had staid here long enough to be present at the explanation, and to hear the proposal to me to write this note."

I was a little surprised—perhaps a little piqued, also, by these last words.

"Events, it is true, connected Mr. Hartright very remarkably with the affair of the letter," I said: "and I readily admit that he conducted himself, all things considered, with great delicacy and discretion. But I am quite at a loss to understand what useful influence his presence could have exercised in relation to the effect of Sir Percival's statement on your mind or mine."

"It was only a fancy," she said, absently. "There is no need to discuss it, Mr. Gilmore. Your experience ought to be, and is, the best guide I can desire."

I did not altogether like her thrusting the whole responsibility, in this marked manner, on my shoulders. If Mr. Fairlie had done it, I should not have been surprised. But resolute, clear-minded Miss Halcombe, was the very last person in the world whom I should have expected to find shrinking from the expression of an opinion of her own.

"If any doubts still trouble you," I said, "why not mention them to me at once? Tell me plainly, have you any reason to distrust Sir Percival Glyde?"

"None whatever."

"Do you see any thing improbable or contradictory in his explanation?"

"How can I say I do, after the proof he has offered me of the truth of it? Can there be better testimony in his favor, Mr. Gilmore, than the testimony of the woman's mother?"

"None better. If the answer to your note of inquiry proves to be satisfactory, I, for one, can not see what more any friend of Sir Percival's can possibly expect from him."

"Then we will post the note," she said, rising to leave the room, "and dismiss all further reference to the subject until the answer arrives. Don't attach any weight to my hesitation. I can give no better reason for it than that I have been overanxious about Laura lately: and anxiety, Mr. Gilmore, unsettles the strongest of us."

She left me abruptly; her naturally firm voice faltering as she spoke those last words. A sensitive, vehement, passionate nature—a woman of ten thousand in these trivial, superficial times. I had known her from her earliest years; I had seen her tested, as she grew up, in more than one trying family crisis, and my long experience made me attach an importance to her hesitation under the circumstances here detailed which I should certainly not have felt in the case of another woman. I could see no cause for any uneasiness or any doubt; but she had made me a little uneasy and a little doubtful nevertheless. In my youth I should have chafed and fretted under the irritation of my own unreasonable state of mind. In my age I knew better, and went out philosophically to walk it off.

II.

WE all met again at dinner-time.

Sir Percival was in such boisterous high spirits that I hardly recognized him as the same man whose quiet tact, refinement, and good sense had impressed me so strongly at the interview of the morning. The only trace of his former self that I could detect reappeared, every now and then, in his manner toward Miss Fairlie. A look or a word from her suspended his loudest laugh, checked his gayest flow of talk, and rendered him all attention to her, and to no one else at table, in an instant. Although he never openly tried to draw her into the conversation, he never lost the slightest chance she gave him of letting her drift into it by accident, and of saying the words to her, under those favorable circumstances, which a man with less tact and delicacy would have pointedly addressed to her the moment they occurred to him. Rather to my surprise, Miss Fairlie appeared to be sensible of his attentions without being moved by them. She was a little confused from time to time, when he looked at her or spoke to her; but she never warmed toward him. Rank, fortune, good-breeding, good looks, the respect of a gentleman, and the devotion of a lover, were all humbly placed at her feet, and, so far as appearances went, were all offered in vain.

On the next day, the Tuesday, Sir Percival went in the morning (taking one of the servants with him as a guide) to Todd's Corner. His inquiries, as I afterward heard, led to no results. On his return he had an interview with Mr. Fairlie, and in the afternoon he and Miss Halcombe rode out together. Nothing else happened worthy of record. The evening passed as usual. There was no change in Sir Percival and no change in Miss Fairlie.

The Wednesday's post brought with it an event—the reply from Mrs. Catherick. I took a copy of the document, which I have preserved, and which I may as well present in this place. It ran as follows:

"MADAM,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, inquiring whether my daughter, Anne, was placed under medical superintendence with my knowledge and approval, and whether the share taken in the matter by Sir Percival Glyde was such as to merit the expression of my gratitude toward that gentleman. Be pleased to accept my answer in the affirmative to both those questions, and believe me to remain, your obedient servant,

"JANE ANNE CATHERICK."

Short, sharp, and to the point: in form, rather a business-like letter for a woman to write; in substance, as plain a confirmation as could be desired of Sir Percival Glyde's statement. This was my opinion, and, with certain minor reservations, Miss Halcombe's opinion also. Sir Percival, when the letter was shown to him, did not appear to be struck by the sharp, short tone of it. He told us that Mrs. Catherick was a woman of few words, a clear-headed, straightforward, unimaginative person, who wrote briefly and plainly, just as she spoke.

The next duty to be accomplished, now that the answer had been received, was to acquaint Miss Fairlie with Sir Percival's explanation. Miss Halcombe had undertaken to do this, and had left the room to go to her sister, when she suddenly returned again, and sat down by the easy-chair in which I was reading the newspaper. Sir Percival had gone out a minute before, to look at the stables, and no one was in the room but ourselves.

"I suppose we have really and truly done all we can?" she said, turning and twisting Mrs. Catherick's letter in her hand.

"If we are friends of Sir Percival's, who know him and trust him, we have done all, and more than all, that is necessary," I answered, a little annoyed by this return of her hesitation. "But if we are enemies who suspect him—"

"That alternative is not even to be thought of," she interposed. "We are Sir Percival's friends; and, if generosity and forbearance can add to our regard for him, we ought to be Sir Percival's admirers as well. You know that he saw Mr. Fairlie yesterday, and that he afterward went out with me?"

"Yes. I saw you riding away together."

"We began the ride by talking about Anne Catherick, and about the singular manner in which Mr. Hartright met with her. But we soon dropped that subject; and Sir Percival spoke next, in the most unselfish terms, of his engagement with Laura. He said he had observed that she was out of spirits, and he was willing, if not informed to the contrary, to attribute to that cause the alteration in her manner toward him during his present visit. If, however, there was any other more serious reason for the change, he would entreat that no constraint might be placed on her inclinations either by Mr. Fairlie or by me. All he asked, in that case, was that she would recall to mind, for the last time, what the circumstances were under which the engagement between them was made, and what his conduct had been from the beginning of the courtship to the present time. If, after due reflection on those two subjects, she seriously desired that he should withdraw his pretensions to the honor of becoming her husband—and if she would tell him so plainly, with her own lips—he would sacrifice himself by leaving her perfectly free to withdraw from the engagement."

"No man could say more than that, Miss Halcombe. As to my experience, few men in his situation would have said as much."

She paused after I had spoken those words, and looked at me with a singular expression of perplexity and distress.

"I accuse nobody and I suspect nothing," she broke out, abruptly. "But I can not and will not accept the responsibility of persuading Laura to this marriage."

"That is exactly the course which Sir Percival Glyde has himself requested you to take," I replied, in astonishment. "He has begged you not to force her inclinations."

"And he indirectly obliges me to force them, if I give her his message."

"How can that possibly be?"

"Consult your own knowledge of Laura, Mr. Gilmore. If I tell her to reflect on the circumstances of her engagement, I at once appeal to two of the strongest feelings in her nature—to her love for her father's memory, and to her strict regard for truth. You know that she never broke a promise in her life; you know that she entered on this engagement at the beginning of her father's fatal illness, and that he spoke hopefully and happily of her marriage to Sir Percival Glyde on his death-bed."

I own that I was a little shocked at this view of the case.

"Surely," I said, "you don't mean to infer that when Sir Percival spoke to you yesterday he speculated on such a result as you have just mentioned?"

Her frank, fearless face answered for her before she spoke,

"Do you think I would remain an instant in the company of any man whom I suspected of such baseness as that?" she asked, angrily.

I liked to feel her hearty indignation flash out on me in that way. We see so much malice and so little indignation in my profession.

"In that case," I said, "excuse me if I tell you, in our legal phrase, that you are traveling out of the record. Whatever the consequences may be, Sir Percival has a right to expect that your sister should carefully consider her engagement from every reasonable point of view before she claims her release from it. If that unlucky letter has prejudiced her against him, go at once, and tell her that he has cleared himself in your eyes and in mine. What objection can she urge against him after that? What excuse can she possibly have for changing her mind about a man whom she virtually accepted for her husband more than two years ago?"

"In the eyes of law and reason, Mr. Gilmore, no excuse, I dare say. If she still hesitates, and if I still hesitate, you must attribute our strange conduct, if you like, to caprice in both cases, and we must bear the imputation as well as we can."

With those words she suddenly rose and left me. When a sensible woman has a serious question put to her, and evades it by a flippant answer, it is a sure sign, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, that she has something to conceal. I returned to the perusal of the newspaper, strongly suspecting that Miss Halcombe and Miss Fairlie had a secret between them which they were keeping from Sir Percival and keeping from me. I thought this hard on both of us—especially on Sir Percival.

My doubts—or, to speak more correctly, my convictions—were confirmed by Miss Halcombe's language and manner when I saw her again later in the day. She was suspiciously brief and reserved in telling me the result of her interview with her sister. Miss Fairlie, it appeared, had listened quietly while the affair of the letter was placed before her in the right point of view; but when Miss Halcombe next proceeded to say that the object of Sir Percival's visit at Limmeridge was to prevail on her to let a day be fixed for the marriage, she checked all further reference to the subject by begging for time. If Sir Percival would consent to spare her for the present she would undertake to give him his final answer before the end of the year. She pleaded for this delay with such anxiety and agitation that Miss Halcombe had promised to use her influence, if necessary, to obtain it; and there, at Miss Fairlie's earnest entreaty, all further discussion of the marriage question had ended.

The purely temporary arrangement thus proposed might have been convenient enough to the young lady; but it proved somewhat embarrassing to the writer of these lines. That morning's post had brought a letter from my partner which obliged me to return to town the next day by the afternoon train. It was extremely probable that I should find no second opportunity of presenting myself at Limmeridge House during the remainder of the year. In that case, supposing Miss Fairlie ultimately decided on holding her engagement, my necessary personal communication with her, before I drew her settlement, would become something like a downright impossibility; and we should be obliged to commit to writing questions which ought always to be discussed on both sides by word of mouth. I said nothing about this difficulty until Sir Percival had been consulted on the subject of the desired delay. He was too gallant a gentleman not to grant the request immediately. When Miss Halcombe informed me of this, I told her that I must absolutely speak to her sister before I left Limmeridge; and it was, therefore, arranged that I should see Miss Fairlie in her own sitting-room the next morning. She did not come down to dinner, or join us in the evening. Indisposition was the excuse; and I thought Sir Percival looked, as well he might, a little annoyed when he heard of it.

The next morning, as soon as breakfast was over, I went up to Miss Fairlie's sitting-room. The poor girl looked so pale and sad, and came forward to welcome me so readily and prettily, that the resolution to lecture her on her caprice and indecision, which I had been forming all the way up stairs, failed me on the spot. I led her back to the chair from which she had risen, and placed myself opposite to her. Her cross-grained pet greyhound was in the room, and I fully expected a barking and snapping reception. Strange to say, the whimsical little brute falsified my expectations by jumping into my lap, and poking its sharp muzzle familiarly into my hand the moment I sat down.

"You used often to sit on my knee when you were a child, my dear," I said, "and now your little dog seems determined to succeed you in the vacant throne. Is that pretty drawing your doing?"

I pointed to a little album which lay on the table by her side, and which she had evidently been looking over when I came in. The page that lay open had a small water-color landscape very neatly mounted on it. This was the drawing which had suggested my question: an idle question enough; but how could I begin to talk of business to her the moment I opened my lips?

"No," she said, looking away from the drawing rather confusedly; "it is not my doing."

Her fingers had a restless habit, which I remembered in her as a child, of always playing with the first thing that came to hand, whenever any one was talking to her. On this occasion they wandered to the album, and toyed absently about the margin of the little water-color drawing. The expression of melancholy deepened on her face. She did not look at the drawing, or look at me. Her eyes moved uneasily from object to object in the room; betraying plainly that she suspected what my purpose was in coming to speak to her. Seeing that, I thought it best to get to the purpose with as little delay as possible.

"One of the errands, my dear, which brings me here is to bid you good-by," I began. "I must get back to London to-day; and, before I leave, I want to have a word with you on the subject of your own affairs."

"I am very sorry you are going, Mr. Gilmore," she said, looking at me kindly. "It is like the happy old times to have you here."

"I hope I may be able to come back, and recall those pleasant memories once more," I continued; "but as there is some uncertainty about the future, I must take my opportunity when I can get it, and speak to you now. I am your old lawyer and your old friend; and I may remind you, I am sure, without offense, of the possibility of your marrying Sir Percival Glyde."

She took her hand off the little album as suddenly as if it had turned hot and burned her. Her fingers twined together nervously in her lap; her eyes looked down again at the floor; and an expression of constraint settled on her face which looked almost like an expression of pain.

"Is it absolutely necessary to speak of my marriage engagement?" she asked, in low tones.

"It is necessary to refer to it," I answered; "but not to dwell on it. Let us merely say that you may marry, or that you may not marry. In the first case, I must be prepared, beforehand, to draw your settlement; and I ought not to do that without, as a matter of politeness, first consulting you. This may be my only chance of hearing what your wishes are. Let us, therefore, suppose the case of your marrying, and let me inform you, in as few words as possible, what your position is now, and what you may make it, if you please, in the future."

I explained to her the object of a marriage settlement; and then told her exactly what her prospects were—in the first place, on her coming of age, and, in the second place, on the decease of her uncle—marking the distinction between the property in which she had a life-interest only, and the property which was left at her own control. She listened attentively, with the constrained expression still on her face, and her hands still nervously clasped together in her lap.

"And now," I said, in conclusion, "tell me if you can think of any condition which, in the case we have supposed, you would wish me to make for you—subject, of course, to your guardian's approval, as you are not yet of age."

She moved uneasily in her chair—then looked in my face, on a sudden, very earnestly.

"If it does happen," she began, faintly; "if I am—"

"If you are married," I added, helping her out.

"Don't let him part me from Marian," she cried, with a sudden outbreak of energy. "Oh, Mr. Gilmore, pray make it law that Marian is to live with me!"

Under other circumstances I might perhaps have been amused at this essentially feminine interpretation of my question, and of the long explanation which had preceded it. But her looks and tones when she spoke were of a kind to make me more than serious—they distressed me. Her words, few as they were, betrayed a desperate clinging to the past which boded ill for the future.

"Your having Marian Halcombe to live with you can easily be settled by private arrangement," I said. "You hardly understood my question, I think. It referred to your own property—to the disposal of your money. Supposing you were to make a will, when you come of age, who would you like the money to go to?"

"Marian has been mother and sister both to me," said the good, affectionate girl, her pretty blue eyes glistening while she spoke. "May I leave it to Marian, Mr. Gilmore?"

"Certainly, my love," I answered. "But remember what a large sum it is. Would you like it all to go to Miss Halcombe?"

She hesitated; her color came and went; and her hand stole back again to the little album.

"Not all of it," she said. "There is some one else besides Marian—"

She stopped; her color heightened; and the fingers of the hand that rested upon the album beat gently on the margin of the drawing, as if her memory had set them going mechanically with the remembrance of a favorite tune.

"You mean some other member of the family besides Miss Halcombe?" I suggested, seeing her at a loss to proceed.

The heightening color spread to her forehead and her neck, and the nervous fingers suddenly clasped themselves fast round the edge of the book.

"There is some one else," she said, not noticing my last words, though she had evidently heard them; "there is some one else who might like a little keepsake if—if I might leave it. There would be no harm if I should die first—"

She paused again. The color that had spread over her cheeks suddenly as suddenly left them. The hand on the album resigned its hold, trembled a little, and moved the book away from her. She looked at me for an instant—then turned her head aside in the chair. Her handkerchief fell to the floor as she changed her position, and she hurriedly hid her face from me in her hands.

Sad! To remember her, as I did, the liveliest, happiest child that ever laughed the day through; and to see her now, in the flower of her age and her beauty, so broken and so brought down as this!

In the distress that she caused me, I forgot the years that had passed, and the change they had made in our position toward one another. I moved my chair close to her, and picked up her handkerchief from the carpet, and drew her hands from her face gently. "Don't cry, my love," I said, and dried the tears that were gathering in her eyes, with my own hand, as if she had been the little Laura Fairlie of ten long years ago.

It was the best way I could have taken to compose her. She laid her head on my shoulder, and smiled faintly through her tears.

"I am very sorry for forgetting myself," she said, artlessly. "I have not been well—I have felt sadly weak and nervous lately; and I often cry without reason when I am alone. I am better now; I can answer you as I ought, Mr. Gilmore; I can indeed."

"No, no, my dear," I replied; "we will consider the subject as done with, for the present. You have said enough to sanction my taking the best possible care of your interests; and we can settle details at another opportunity. Let us have done with business now, and talk of something else."

I led her at once into speaking on other topics. In ten minutes' time she was in better spirits, and I rose to take my leave.

"Come here again," she said, earnestly. "I will try to be worthier of your kind feeling for me and for my interests if you will only come again."

Still clinging to the past—the past which I represented to her, in my way, as Miss Halcombe did in hers! It troubled me sorely to see her looking back at the beginning of her career, just as I look back at the end of mine.

"If I do come again, I hope I shall find you better," I said—"better and happier. God bless you, my dear."

She only answered by putting up her cheek to me to be kissed. Even lawyers have hearts; and mine ached a little as I took leave of her.

The whole interview between us had hardly lasted more than half an hour—she had not breathed a word, in my presence, to explain the mystery of her evident distress and dismay at the prospect of her marriage—and yet she had contrived to win me over to her side of the question, I neither knew how nor why. I had entered the room feeling that Sir Percival Glyde had fair reason to complain of the manner in which she was treating him. I left it, secretly hoping that matters might end in her taking him at his word and claiming her release. A man of my age and experience ought to have known better than to vacillate in this unreasonable manner. I can make no excuse for myself; I can only tell the truth, and say—so it was.

The hour for my departure was now drawing near. I sent to Mr. Fairlie to say that I would wait on him to take leave if he liked, but that he must excuse my being rather in a hurry. He sent a message back, written in pencil on a slip of paper: "Kind love and best wishes, dear Gilmore. Hurry of any kind is inexpressibly injurious to me. Pray take care of yourself. Good-by."

Just before I left I saw Miss Halcombe, for a moment, alone.

"Have you said all you wanted to Laura?" she asked.

"Yes," I replied. "She is very weak and nervous—I am glad she has you to take care of her."

Miss Halcombe's sharp eyes studied my face attentively.

"You are altering your opinion about Laura," she said. "You are readier to make allowances for her than you were yesterday."

No sensible man ever engages, unprepared, in a fencing match of words with a woman. I only answered:

"Let me know what happens. I will do nothing till I hear from you."

She still looked hard in my face. "I wish it was all over, and well over, Mr. Gilmore—and so do you." With those words she left me.

Sir Percival most politely insisted on seeing me to the carriage door.

"If you are ever in my neighborhood," he said, "pray don't forget that I am sincerely anxious to improve our acquaintance. The tried and trusted old friend of this family will be always a welcome visitor in any house of mine."

A really irresistible man—courteous, considerate, delightfully free from pride—a gentleman every inch of him. As I drove away to the station I felt as if I could cheerfully do any thing to promote the interests of Sir Percival Glyde—any thing in the world, except drawing the marriage settlement of his wife.

DOMESTIC INTELLIGENCE.

CONGRESS.

On Tuesday, January 3, in the Senate, a number of private bills were read and referred, as also many petitions of no general interest. Senator King had the resolutions of the Rochester Union meeting read, and then proceeded to speak of the evidences of attachment to the Union presented by the people of New York. Senator Brown explained the grounds of his dissent from some of the views put forth by the President in his Message. Mr. Doolittle took the floor and spoke of slave labor. He was frequently interrupted.——In the House, speeches on slavery were made by Messrs. Boyce and English. Mr. Anderson presented a memorial from mail contractors, asking for relief. He then urged a speedy organization of the House, and proposed a union of Anti-Lecomptonites, Americans, and Democrats. Mr. Stevens proposed a plurality vote *viva voce*. Many Democrats being absent, those present asked the Republicans to pair off with them before voting. This was refused; but the House adjourned without voting for Speaker.

On Wednesday, January 4, in the Senate, a bill was introduced by Senator Powell to abolish the franking privilege. Senator Toombs presented a petition relative to the Houmas Land Grant, and moved its reference to the Committee on Private Lands; referred to a Select Committee. Senators Mason, Harlan, and Foster then spoke on slavery, after which the Senate adjourned.——In the House, the subject of the distress of mail contractors was again brought up, and the necessity for a prompt organization dwelt upon. Mr. Reagan, Mr. Cox, and several South Americans spoke on slavery and party politics; after which a vote for Speaker was had, Mr. Sherman lacking three votes of an election. Mr. M'Clernand was next highest, receiving 58 votes.

On Thursday, January 5, in the Senate, no business was transacted and no speeches made.——In the House, Mr. Montgomery renewed his proposition for a temporary organization of the House, and urged the necessities of the mail contractors. Mr. Wilson requested him to adopt the plurality rule, when he replied that, if he was willing, others were unwilling. Speeches on slavery were then made by Messrs. Reagan, Wells, and others. Two votes were had for Speaker, Mr. Sherman lacking still the three votes necessary to elect him, and Mr. Vallandigham receiving, on the first ballot, 63. On the second vote Mr. Bocock got the highest Democratic vote, which was 56. A discussion then ensued as to the inability of either party to consummate an election. An exciting altercation took place between Messrs. Davis, Porter, and Dunn, of Indiana—the two latter charging the former, who is an Anti-Lecompton Democrat, with having denounced the Dred Scott decision, which he denied *in toto*, pronouncing the charge maliciously false. An extract from his speech was read to confirm the charge, when Mr. Davis pronounced the report of his remarks false. Without taking another vote for Speaker the House adjourned.

On Friday, Jan. 6, the Senate not being in session, in the House, Mr. Miles resumed his remarks, to show how the three elements opposed to the Democracy could be harmonized for the purpose of effecting an organization. He argued that the responsibility for the non-organization rested with the Anti-Lecompton Democrats. Mr. Adrain followed in explanation of his position and course as an Anti-Lecompton Democrat. The debate taking this turn, was participated in by Messrs. Clark, De Jarnette, Briggs, and Hickman. A vote was had, Mr. Sherman still lacking three votes. Mr. McClernand was next highest, receiving 37. Adjourned.

MESSAGE OF THE GOVERNOR OF NEW YORK.

The Message of Governor Morgan is mainly taken up with the consideration of domestic matters, and alludes to the affairs of the nation only to express the loyalty of New York to the Constitution, and the firm adherence of Governor Morgan to the Republican doctrine of Congressional intervention to prohibit slavery in the Territories of the Union. The most striking of the Governor's suggestions to the Legislature are a proposition for the revival of the protective policy in regard to our canals by imposing a moderate toll for a few years during the season of freight upon all railways which compete with the canals; the suggestion that the canal tolls should be raised; and the recommendation of a law authorizing aliens to take, hold, and convey real estate in this State. The Governor is concerned about the defenses of New York City, against pestilence in time of peace and foes in time of war; approves our Metropolitan Police and the new Quarantine; desires to see more railways in the upper part of the City, and is delighted with the Central Park. He asks that the property qualification be removed in the case of colored voters; discourages special, in favor of general, legislation; commends our schools, prisons, banks, and asylums, and finds the condition of our State finances both creditable and satisfactory. The new year of New York begins, according to this Message, under the brightest auspices.

MESSAGE OF THE GOVERNOR OF OHIO.

Governor Chase, of Ohio, in his Message to the Legislature, states that the total amount of receipts into the State Treasury, during the last year, was $3,520,154, which, with the balance of $226,118 remaining at the close of the preceding year, made the sum subject to disbursement $3,746,272. The whole amount of disbursements was $3,552,304. The public works and educational institutions absorbed the larger part of this sum. More than three-eighths the entire levy for State purposes is for the support of schools and school libraries. Governor Chase recommends the re-enactment of the statutes which the last Legislature repealed, prohibiting slaveholding and kidnapping. He thinks that it would be useless to pass laws giving the negroes the right of suffrage; the Courts, not the Legislature, are to determine this question. The militia of the State, which was nearly disorganized four years ago, has been reorganized to such an extent that it forms a nucleus for a volunteer force entirely competent to any ordinary emergency. In conclusion, Governor Chase makes reference to the Harper's Ferry *émeute*, reaffirming the position which he took in his response to Governor Wise, and maintaining that the South has done much to bring about the present unhappy state of feeling between the two sections of the country by repealing the Missouri Compromise, kidnapping from the soil of the Free States persons guilty only of the crime of color, and by reiterating so frequently and needlessly her threats of disunion.

MESSAGE OF THE GOVERNOR OF PENNSYLVANIA.

The Message of the Governor of Pennsylvania refers to the Harper's Ferry difficulty, and says that it is gratifying to Pennsylvanians to believe that the citizens of the Commonwealth did not in any manner participate in that unlawful proceeding, and to know that when some of the guilty parties were arrested within its jurisdiction, they were promptly surrendered. He adds: "Pennsylvania's central position, with three millions of freemen, enables her to say with emphasis to the plotters of treason on either hand, that neither shall be permitted to succeed—that it shall not be in the power of either to disturb the perpetuity of a Union cemented and sanctified by the blood of our patriotic fathers. At every sacrifice the constitutional rights of the people and the States shall be maintained—equal justice done to all—and these States be united forever." The Governor congratulates the Legislature that the State debt is decreasing at the rate of a million yearly—resulting mainly from the sale of the Canals.

SENATOR DOUGLAS NOMINATED FOR THE PRESIDENCY.

The Illinois Democratic State Convention last week selected delegates to the Charleston Convention, instructing them to sustain Mr. Douglas for the Presidency. The resolutions reaffirm the Cincinnati Platform, without "note or comment," and declare against a Congressional slave code for the Territories.

PERSONAL.

Senator Mason appeared in his seat on Wednesday clad in Virginia homespun, while a Southern member of the other House sported a suit of "direct importation."

The *Tribune* says: "When Governor Seward entered his gateway, and was standing within it, all the clergymen of the various denominations in Auburn waiting to welcome him home, he lost the power of speech. He entered his house in silence. Among the very many pleasing incidents in his reception, was an evening visit of congratulation from thirty little girls.

The Hon. John M. Landrum, M. C. from Louisiana, has been detained from his seat by illness since the opening of the session. It is stated that, besides being sick in body, he is laboring under severe mental affliction in the loss of his wife and four children. It is feared that he [illegible] again. He is at Brown's Hotel, Washington.

The New York correspondent of the Philadelphia *Press* writes:

"The following gossip is current respecting a vein of affluence that has just been struck by the Mayor elect: In December, 1856, John C. Frémont, after being defeated in his aspirations for the Presidency, became very short of money, and sold to Benjamin and Fernando Wood one half of his famous claims to gold mines in California. The Woods advanced Frémont from $50,000 to $70,000 to pay interests, legal expenses, etc. The Supreme Court (news arrived yesterday) sustains Frémont's claims. His receipts now, and those of his partners, B. and F. Wood, will not fall short of $1000 a day!"

A horse arrived here on Saturday from Italy, only seven hands high. He is to be sent to Washington to Mr. Buchanan as a present from J. H. Biuda, the United States Consul.

Senator Douglas was reported sick on Thursday. He may yet be obliged to go South.

The Alexandria *Sentinel* says: "A gentleman, whose word is proof, informs us that Mr. John A. Washington has in his possession a letter from responsible parties who made a *bona fide* offer of $250,000 for the Mount Vernon property sold by him to the ladies of the Mount Vernon Association for $200,000."

The Skaneateles *Democrat* gives the first chapter in "a story of real life," by saying that Miss Harriet E. Smith, daughter of Mr. Horace Smith, of Spafford, Onondaga County, New York, will start soon for Washington Territory, away in the Northwest, beyond the Rocky Mountains, to marry a man she has never seen—Mr. D. Spalding, Jun., son of David Spalding, of Spafford. The friends of the parties are intimate, and a correspondence between them has continued for two years, and has resulted in a marriage contract. The young gentleman, being engaged in a profitable business which he can not conveniently leave, has remitted funds to the lady, with a request for her to join him there.

The *Tribune* says: "Gerrit Smith is very much improved in all respects, but is not yet fully restored to health, and the doctor has prohibited him from receiving visitors, and from giving personal attention to his correspondence. It is hoped that his numerous friends will acknowledge the propriety and necessity of the injunction under which his physician has placed him, and act in accordance with it."

We have noticed the suicide, by hanging, of a youth named William Greer in Wheeling. The *Union* of that city says: "No cause has yet been assigned for the committal of the deed, except that the deceased had been deeply interested in the trials and executions of the Harper's Ferry insurrectionists, and has perused carefully every thing coming in his way bearing upon those events; his friends are disposed to conclude from this that his desire to test the nature of strangulation by hanging led him to try an experiment which terminated fatally. The deceased was a promising lad about seventeen years of age."

The Boston *Atlas* says it is now announced positively that the Rev. Thomas Starr King has accepted the invitation of the Unitarian Society of San Francisco, California, to become their pastor. His letter of resignation to the Hollis Street Church and Society was submitted to his people on Monday at a meeting called for that purpose.

The Managers of the Grand Trunk Railroad desired a large number of axes, but having no faith in Yankee manufactures, got a scientific man to invent a pattern of the axes required, and sent to England to have the same made. In due time two thousand five hundred axes were sent to Canada, *but not one of the whole number had a hole to receive the handle!*

Squire Merihant, in Cincinnati, last week, was called on to unite in wedlock, at the Burnett House, a couple who had fled from Fayette County, Kentucky. At the Spencer House another couple—the male somewhat advanced, and the bride but eighteen—were also anxious to unite themselves for life. The proper authority was summoned, and they were accommodated. The strangest part of the affair is this: the bridegroom at the Burnett House and the bridegroom at the Spencer were son and father. Both had eloped from the same vicinity with the same intent; neither knew the purpose of the other, and both came on the same train. When the young man learned the facts, the Burnett House repaired to the Spencer, and it is said a most glorious time ensued.

A citizen at Harper's Ferry has just forwarded for presentation to Governor Wise the pocket-knife of John Brown. The article in question is now in the *Enquirer* office, awaiting the Governor's return to Richmond. It is an old jack-knife, a bone handle and two blades, and has evidently seen much service. A small brass plate on the handle is engraved with the name "John Brown." On one side of the large blade are now inscribed the words, "Pirate Chief and Robber of Kansas. Taken from his person. Attack on Harper's Ferry Armory 17th October, 1859." On the other side of the blade: "Presented to Gov. Henry A. Wise, of Virginia, by Arch'd M. Kitzmiller."

Mr. Philip Schaffer, in the town of Paris, Grant County, Wisconsin, had a remarkable adventure the other day. He chased a bear that was committing depredations in that vicinity, and, overtaking the "anamile," jumped a-straddle of him; and after being thus carried for some distance, Schaffer vainly attempting to overpower Bruin with a knife, the beast climbed a tree, Schaffer still clinging to his back. The bear, however, "rubbed" him off by going through the fork of the tree, and hastening down, Schaffer ran for his gun and shot the bear, killing him. This is a hard story, but is vouched for by the postmaster at Dickeyville, who details the facts to the editor of the Galena *Advertiser*. Mr. Schaffer's experience at riding *bear back* qualifies him for a prominent place among our modern turfsmen.

The Evansville *Enquirer* announces the return of the Hon. Robert Dale Owen to his old home, in Posey County, Indiana.

A letter from Havana, in the New Orleans *Picayune*, dated August 24, states that baptism had taken place there of no less a personage than the son of the Chief, or King, of the Loango Congo district of Africa, who came passenger to Cuba in 1857 upon a slaver, and fell into the hands of the government as an ordinary Bozal. After two years of official examination and investigation, in Havana and upon the coast of Africa, he has been identified as the royal personage, son of Côngo's great king, long familiar with Cuban traders, and was Christianized at his own request. He talks Spanish, Portuguese, and French, and as soon as he has been thoroughly imbued or taught the tenets of his new faith he will be sent to Spain, and thence restored to his anxious father. He requested Colonel Felipe Avango, in charge of the Emancipado Dépôt, to stand as sponsor for him before the altar, which request he complied with in the presence of a crowd attracted by the royal novelty.

The gentleman who subscribed, some weeks since, the munificent sum of £3000 sterling, or $15,000, toward building a chapel for Mr. Spurgeon, was Mr. Henry John Stephen, a retired barrister-at-law, residing at Clifton, in Glostershire, England. This wealthy individual expends annually a very large sum in the building of dissenting chapels throughout England, and dispenses a portion of his ample fortune through the medium of his private chaplain, the Rev. Edward Thomas Inskip, a gentleman well known in Bristol, England, for his evangelical principles.

FOREIGN NEWS.

ENGLAND.

BRITISH OPINION ON JOHN BROWN.

The London *Times* has a leader on the execution of John Brown, and the circumstances it gave rise to. It says that it appears somewhat ludicrous to find that the North did nothing until Brown was executed, and adds that this does not convey a very exalted notion of their zeal or determination of purpose. It sums up as follows:

"The result will be to strengthen the South by the adhesion of the floating mass of opinion which in every country lies between two extremes. Whatever may be the future of the negro race, no one in his senses can believe its regeneration can be effected by [illegible] it to murder planters and ravish white women; and if any man chooses to head an outbreak of this kind, he must expect to meet a fate which right-thinking men will not glorify with a crown of martyrdom."

FRANCE.

THE EUROPEAN CONGRESS.

The Paris *Pays* publishes the following as the definite official list of the plenipotentiaries:

Austria—Count Rechberg, and Prince de Metternich.
Great Britain—Lord Cowley, and Lord Wodehouse.
Prussia—Baron Schleinitz and Count Pourtales.
Russia—Prince Gorchakoff and Count Kisseleff.
France—Count Walewski and Prince Latour de Amoyne.
Spain—M. Martinez de la Rosa and M. Mon.
Portugal—Count Lavaradio and Viscount de Paiva.

The *Pays* adds that the names of the representatives of the Holy See, the two Sicilies, Sardinia, and Sweden, are not yet officially known; but a Turin dispatch says that Count Cavour has been definitely appointed first Plenipotentiary for Sardinia, and the Chevalier Desambrois the second, and that France has been officially notified of the fact. It is also positively asserted that Cardinal Antonelli will represent the Pope.

The *Pays* announces that the opening of the Congress will definitely take place on the 20th of January.

THE EXPECTED NEW-YEAR'S DAY GIFT TO FRANCE.

The London *Daily News* correspondent in Paris says that it was currently reported that the expected reduction in the tariff would apply principally to cotton, and that iron would not be benefited by it.

THE LEMOINE CASE.

"Malakoff" writes to the *Times*: "The condemnation of Madame Lemoine to twenty years' hard labor in the Penitentiary, and the acquittal of the daughter, is a judgment which, if not generally approved, is certainly not far from justice. The punishment is two removes below that demanded by the indictment—that is to say, the guillotine. The daughter was acquitted on account of her extreme youth, and the loose manner in which her religious education was conducted. Her favorite reading was the 'Confessions of Marian Delorme,' or those of Jean Jacques Rousseau. She evidently acted without discernment. She has been brought to Paris by her relatives, and placed under the charge of the Sisters of Charity.

"A singular incident connected with the crime of Madame Lemoine shows how it is possible to mingle poetry with crime—a sentiment of religious piety with an act of cruel barbarity. The magistrate charged with the examination of the house of Madame Lemoine found in the ashes of the chimney, mingled with the remains of the burned child, some flowers—a jasmine and a rose—placed there as upon a grave."

A HORSE OPERATION.

The Paris correspondent of the *Courrier des Etats Unis* gives an account of a horse operation by one American on another, brought before the Civil Tribunal of Paris. The subject of the story is, or rather was, called Jack Rossiter. He was no common animal, without pedigree, as appeared; for Harlan, the American who claimed him, had brought him from New York to England. The noble beast was stabled in London, in which city was staying another American sportsman, James Bevin, a rival and friend, up to that time, of Harlan. But it came to pass one day, during the absence of Harlan, that Bevin gained over the groom of Jack Rossiter, and took off the animal. Harlan thereupon, in desperation, undertook to search for the horse, and, after a thousand vicissitudes, found him in Paris, led by the negro servant of Bevin. He followed, entered his complaint, and went to London for the documents establishing his ownership. When he returned, Jack Rossiter and his takers had disappeared anew. Harlan began the hunt afresh, found the horse, but the animal had passed through several hands. Harlan went from buyer to buyer to one named Tielton, living at the Louvre Hotel, in company with Bevin, who pretends that Harlan, being his debtor, gave Jack Rossiter in payment. Harlan denies this, and demands an inquiry, which the Tribunal has accorded to him.

AUSTRIA.

PROBABLE RISING IN HUNGARY.

Advices from Hungary represent the danger of a conflict between the Imperial authorities and the Hungarian Protestants, as daily increasing. The Austrian army in Hungary would soon be 50,000 strong. A significant demonstration had taken place in Pesth, and a fall of about 1½ per cent had resulted in the Vienna Bourse.

SPAIN.

THE WAR WITH MOROCCO.

The latest accounts from Morocco are to the 16th. The Moors were still assailants, their attacks being continued with the same impetuous bravery, and each time with great numbers.

Private letters from Cadiz state that the plan of the Spaniards is to attack Tetuan on two sides simultaneously, or by land from Ceuta and from the river. Tetuan is defended by earthworks and redans.

A Madrid letter of the 14th says that the Spanish army amounted to 40,000, but that O'Donnell was continually asking for fresh reinforcements. His position was considered difficult.

A Madrid telegram says:

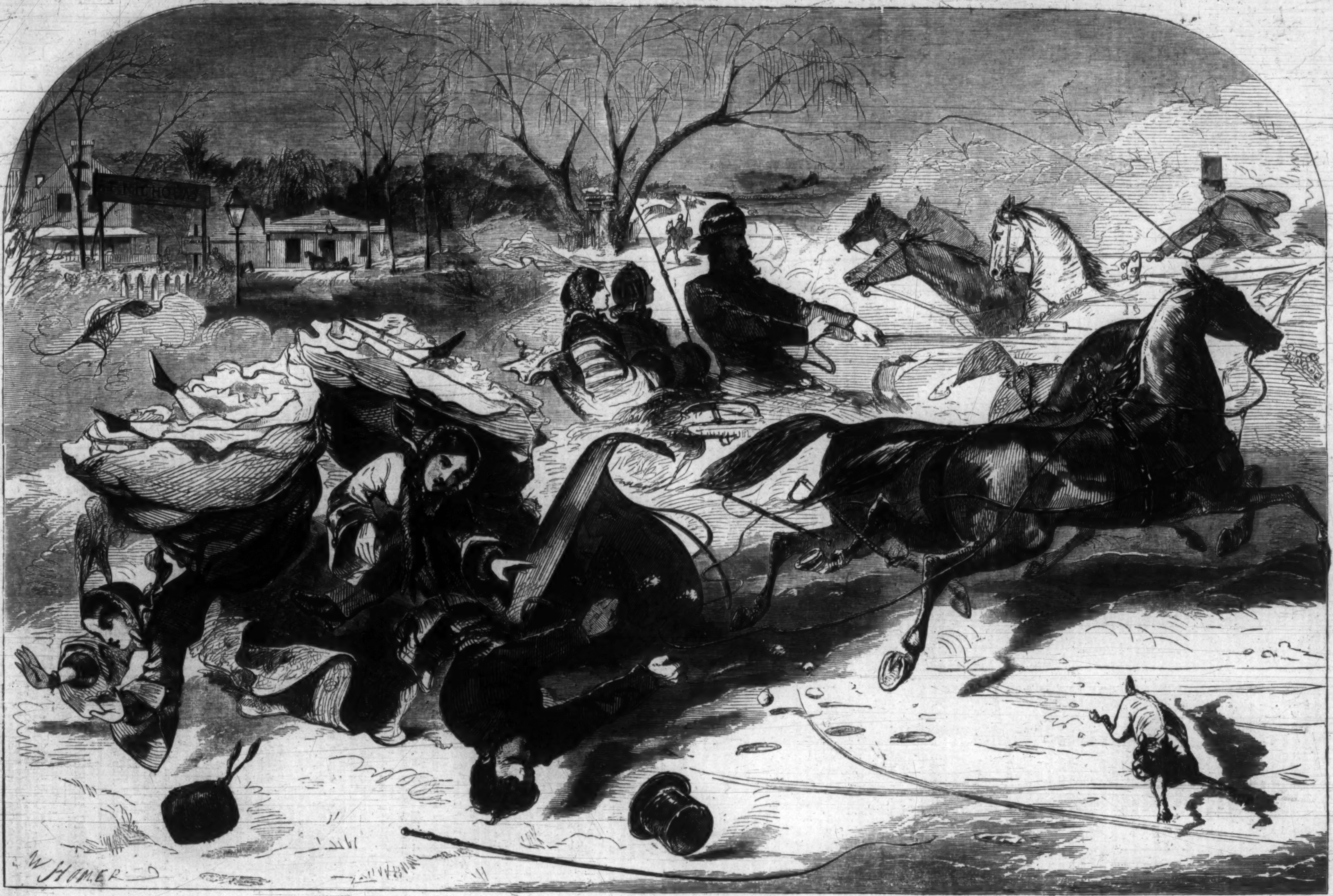
"Yesterday 15,000 Moors attacked the left redoubt, but General Ros de Olano surrounded them with his right wing and drove them back at the point of the bayonet. Our artillery inflicted great loss upon them. Our troops, as they invariably do, displayed great valor. Generals Cassis and Garcia particularly distinguished themselves. The enemy lost 1500 men. We had 30 killed and 126 wounded."

Heavy rains had inundated the Spanish camp and the surrounding country.

INDIA.

EXECUTION OF A RAJAH.

Rajah Jeyloll Singh paid the extreme penalty of the law on Saturday morning last, the 1st October, at "the scene of the massacre." By six o'clock the arrangements for the execution were complete. Before removing the handcuffs Mr. Carnegy asked the prisoner if he had any thing to say. Jeyloll Singh denied to the last his own guilt, averring that he was about to suffer for the crimes of others, especially of his servants; that he was not present when the murders were committed, did not even know the exact day, and that it was only on his return to the city after three days' absence that he heard of what had been done the day before. He finally offered to pay any amount—from a lac upward—for a commutation of his sentence, and begged that the proposal might be communicated to the Chief Commissioner before he was hanged. The death warrant was then read to him; after which the handcuffs were removed, his hands were pinioned behind, the cap put over his face, and himself assisted to mount the platform. He throughout maintained the most perfect composure, repeating to himself some prayers. As soon as the noose had been adjusted, Mr. Carnegy, in a clear audible voice, briefly explained to the crowd around that the criminal on the gallows before them was the Rajah Jeyloll Singh, who on that very spot, where stood before an outer gateway of the Kaiser Bagh, had stationed himself on the top of it, and caused in its immediate vicinity the cold-blooded murder of some twenty-two or twenty-three Europeans and other Christians—that he had been tried and convicted of the deed on the clearest and most conclusive evidence, and that he had been sentenced to death—to be hanged at the "scene of massacre." He then gave the order for the withdrawal of the props, and a single jerk left the culprit swinging in the air. He died very hard. It was a good five minutes before life was extinct. The body was left hanging for about an hour, after which it was taken down and buried outside the jail. Thus ended the days of Rajah Jeyloll Singh.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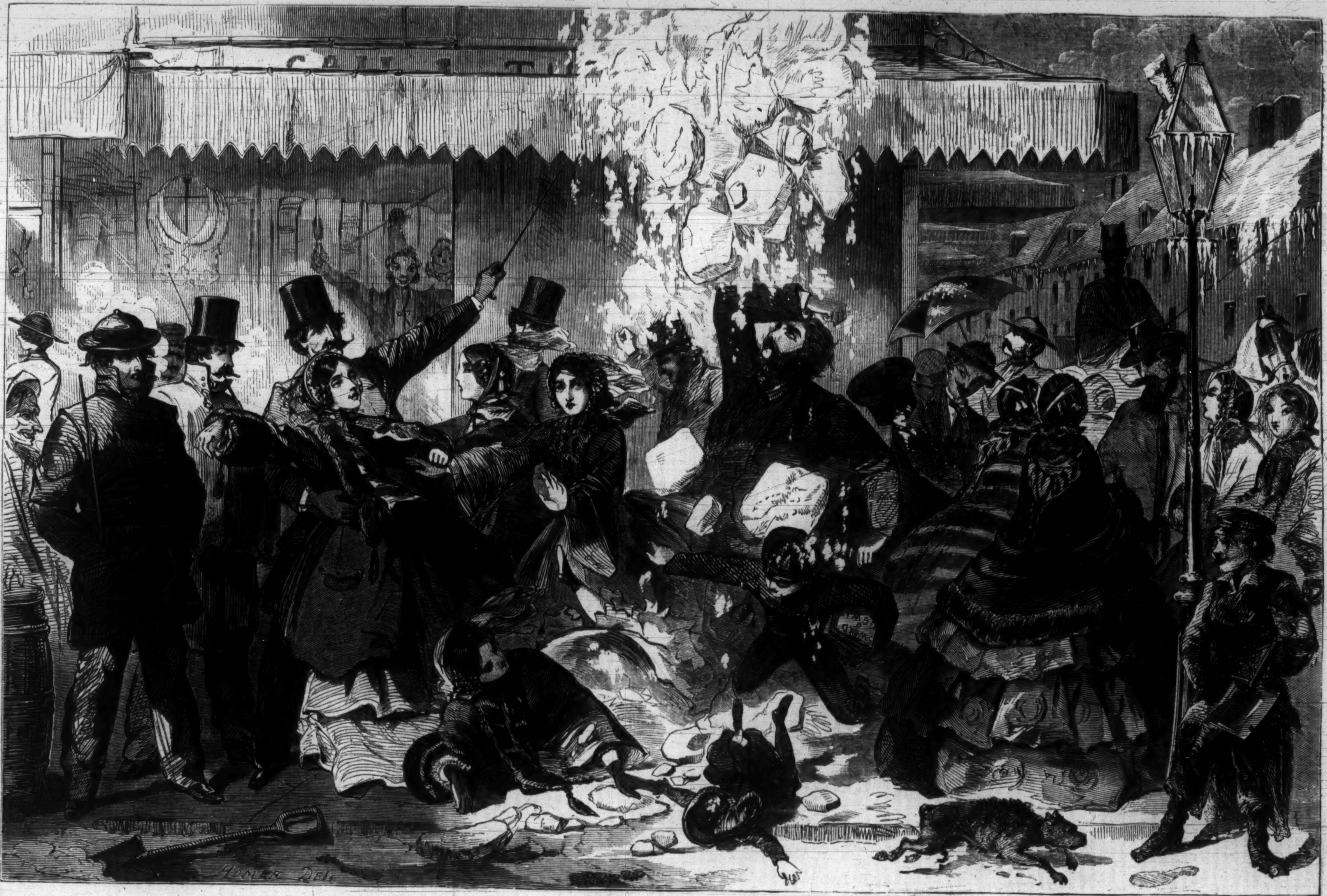
THE SLEIGHING SEASON—THE UPSET.



A SNOW SLIDE IN THE CITY.

ANNE AND I.

I AM an old maid.

There is a period in life when such a confession is very difficult to make. From thirty to forty, which is a sort of chrysalis state, when one clings a little to past hopes, and feels quite confident their like will come no more, there is a decided sensitiveness in regard to autobiographical dates, a shrinking from prolonged interviews with genealogists and inquisitive old ladies, and even a latent dread of the contemporaries of youth, who are happily married, and generously teach their offspring to call you "*aunt.*"

This transition period has passed for me long ago; in fact, I am a score of years beyond it; and now, sitting here by the fire in my cap and spectacles, and deep wrinkles, I will tell you my little story.

I was very pretty when I was seventeen years old. I could not help knowing it, and the knowledge was accompanied by a little fluttering thrill of pleasure which mother and Anne called vanity; but as I always to this day have the same feeling at sight of any thing lovely and fair, be it human face or delicate field flower, I think they were mistaken.

My mother was one of the best of women—to me far the best woman I ever knew. You recollect the picture of Faith that hangs at the foot of my bed. I have it there, where my glance may fall upon it last at night and first in the morning, because the serious mouth, and saintly eyes, and bands of shining hair are so very like hers, who is now, I trust, in heaven. By this you will know that my mother was beautiful as well as good.

Sister Anne was ten years older than I. She was a great deal better than ever I thought of being, for she could do all sorts of household work; and then she had a way of helping the poor, and nursing the sick, and comforting the afflicted, and making garments for dirty children, like the good Dorcas of whom we read in the Acts of the Apostles; so every one in the village looked up to her, and paid her as much respect as they did the minister's wife.

As for me, I am sadly afraid I never did any thing to make people look up to me with respect. At home I was so careless that if dear mother had not been a saint, and Anne a feminine edition of Job, I should never have known where to find a single article of my wardrobe. And as for pickling, and preserving, and nice cooking, and the homelier offices of sweeping, dusting, and the like, I could not bring myself to them with any degree of patience. In vain the good mother often said to me, "My dear Rose, these actions that seem so slight to you may be done in such a spirit as to please God, as good George Herbert says:

"A servant with this clause
Makes drudgery divine:
Who sweeps a room, as for Thy laws,
Makes that and the action fine."

I liked the poetry; it was simple and sweet; but it failed to beautify brooms and dusters in my estimation.

Anne had a lover over seas, who was to come home some day when he had made a large fortune and marry her. They parted, with this hope in prospect, when she was eighteen and I a little girl of eight; and as years passed I should have forgotten the existence of Ralph Haven, had it not been for the monthly advent of a foreign letter, which Anne, with heightened color and shining eyes, always took to her own chamber to feast upon in solitude.

When I was just turned of nineteen I had the first great sorrow of my life.

We had been spending one of our quietly happy evenings—mother, Anne, and I—in our cozy winter parlor. They had been sewing while I read aloud, and after that we had a little concert. Anne played very well upon an old harpsichord that had been a wedding present to mother, and we all sang to that accompaniment. I think it was as sweet music as I ever heard. At ten o'clock, our usual hour for evening prayers, Martha came in from the kitchen, and I brought the great family Bible for mother to read. She turned over the leaves slowly, pausing at the record of her marriage, and at last selecting the Sixteenth Psalm, which she read through, repeating the last verse three times with great emphasis: "Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." And then she knelt down to pray—my dear, dear mother! There was a full minute of intense silence, and then Anne and Martha lifted her in their arms, and bore her, a senseless weight, to her bedroom close by.

It was paralysis!

This happened in February, and for three months we watched and prayed and hoped that she might in some degree recover the use of her limbs and her speech. Poor Anne lost all her little beauty in constant care and anxiety. Her cheeks grew thin and white, her gray eyes sunken; here and there a thread of silver mingled with her dark hair, and two deep lines marred the smoothness of her low forehead. But she was never weary, never impatient, and mother could not bear her out of her sight a single moment; so there she staid by the invalid's couch, smoothing her pillows, holding her poor hands, and smiling sweetly in her face, until it seemed to me that our Anne was little less than an angel. Early in May mother died; and forgetting the few months of suffering, our memory gave her to us as she used to be—gentle, tender, loving—and we mourned for her with deep sorrow. We buried her in the garden, under the shadow of her favorite tree—for we wanted to feel that she was near us still—and we planted shrubs and fair flowers over her grave.

And now that all was over, Anne began to think of herself. She kept it from me as long as it was possible, but at length I learned the truth. Long watching, and care, and grief had done their work, and Anne was going blind!

The first I knew of it was one evening about a fortnight after the funeral. We were standing together at the open window, before the lamp was lit, talking of mother, when my eyes chanced to fall upon the new moon just sinking behind the dark line of pines that skirted the western horizon. I drew Anne's attention, and for a minute or more she strained her poor eyes to catch its tremulous silver light; then shaking her head, she laid her soft hand in mine, and whispered, sadly:

"I can not see it, Rose."

I looked down in her face—for I was a head taller than she—and I have never forgotten the expression of divine resignation that softened every feature.

"Can not see it, sister!" I echoed.

"No, dear; nor the stars. It is a long while that I have not seen the stars, and I miss them more than I can tell. They always comforted me so! Rose, my child, your poor sister's sight is fading!"

I would not believe it. The thought of Anne blind—good, thoughtful, careful Anne, who was now looking forward to one great joy, the speedy return of her lover—she to have her eyes darkened! Oh, no! God, who was good and kind, would not suffer it. Thus reasoned the foolish girl at eighteen. Since then I have learned to trust His love, although I often fail to understand the way by which He leads me.

Neither Anne nor I closed our eyes to sleep that night. We thought and planned until daybreak, for, if what she said were true, something must be done, and that speedily. Surely there was room for hope when there were such great oculists in New York and Philadelphia; they could, they *must* help Anne! As if in anticipation of our wishes, there came within the week a letter from one of mother's old friends who lived in New York. It was full of gentle sympathy and kindness, and she begged one of us to come to her for a few weeks of rest. Here was just the opening we needed, and of course Anne must go. And yet, so careful was she for me that she would scarcely consent to the journey. She knew how lonely the house would be with mother and her both gone; and then I knew so little about housekeeping. I verily think she would have given up the journey, and been content to settle down to her darkened life, for the sake of saving me the trouble and pain of a separation, had it not been for the thought of her lover. As it was, she spent a week in arranging for my comfort, mapping out Martha's work with the utmost precision, and even writing down on a slip of paper the things I must try to do and care for while she was gone.

I knew I should miss our Anne, but I had not anticipated such utter loneliness. When I went back into the house after watching the stage until it was out of sight, I wandered about from room to room unable to set myself at work. Every article of furniture was in nicest order. Anne's last work had been to set back a chair and pick a thread from the table-cloth. I think it was a great mistake to leave me with nothing to do but to sit down and cry.

Anne wrote immediately on her arrival at New York, but after that Mrs. Allen wrote for her. She had put herself under the care of an eminent oculist, who gave her strong hopes of a permanent cure, only the strictest care was to be observed for several weeks.

It was hard to think of Anne lying in a darkened room, when the dear world was so fair and full of bloom; but she sent me such cheerful messages that at last I began to think she was less afflicted than I. I might have known her better—I who had witnessed her beautiful life of unselfishness and love.

One day—I think it was the 2d of June—I gathered from Anne's garden and mine a bunch of roses, the first of the season, and carried them to fill a marble vase on mother's grave. It was almost sunset, and I lingered a long time thinking of the dear one whose body lay there, and pleasing myself with the idea that her pure spirit might be near me, though unseen, and also thinking of Anne, and wishing she were again at home.

This reverie was interrupted by the unusual sound of approaching footsteps, too heavy and measured for Martha's. I looked up, and saw, through my tears, a man of medium height, stout figure and swarthy complexion, whose deep-set gray eyes were fastened upon the white marble cross which marked my mother's grave. It was too nearly dusk for him to read the simple inscription, and, turning to me, he asked, in a sharp, abrupt voice,

"Who lies buried there?"

"My mother, Mary Wesley," I replied, brushing away my tears, and rising from the green turf.

"And where is Anne? Are you the little Rose grown so tall as this? You were a mere baby then; but it is nearly twelve years—twelve long years!"

So this was Ralph Haven, Anne's friend, come home at last. We walked slowly toward the house, and he did not repeat his inquiry for her, but all the way I was puzzling my head to plan the gentlest manner in which to communicate the intelligence of her misfortune; for I knew he expected to meet her in the house. When we came upon the terrace, under the parlor-window, I stopped short, and, looking up into his face, said, slowly:

"Sister Anne is not at home; she is in New York."

"And yet she knew I was coming!"

The tone in which these words were uttered was a reflection upon Anne's faithfulness, and I cried,

"Yes, Sir, she knew, but Anne is almost blind. She is there for advice; I hope for cure."

"Anne blind! Anne Wesley blind! Child, are you telling me the truth?"

He was greatly moved, else I should have resented his ungentle words and manner. As it was, I sat down near him, upon the piazza, and talked of her and mother until quite late, without lighting the lamps or going into the parlor.

"Of course he will go to New York at once," I said to myself, after he left me, as I locked the hall-door and closed the windows for the night—"of course; and how happy Anne will be!"

But I was mistaken. The next morning, while I was busy tying up a drooping heliotrope, Mr. Haven came again, and stood leaning over the gate talking about the flowers until I was ready to go in; then he pushed it open, and followed me up the path gathering a few buds from Anne's rose-bush, which naturally led the conversation to her. I was only too glad to speak her praises to some one besides Martha, and in Mr. Haven I had a most eager listener. I remember, as I watched his kindling face, I wished I had some such friend, one who would be as true and faithful. Soon after this I had a few lines from Anne written by her own hand. "I am better," she wrote; "please God, I shall soon be quite well, and with you again, little sister. Do all you can to make Ralph happy; I give him into your care. The Doctor refused to let him come to me at present. How I long to see you both."

Just as I finished crying over this note I heard Mr. Haven's step on the graveled walk, and ran to meet him, with it open in my hand. It was such a relief to find that he did not stay away from Anne, voluntarily, that I was quite ready to obey her injunction.

He, too, had received a line, and I had never seen him wear so bright a look as when I ran down the steps and slipped my hand through his arm, full of joy for the two bits of letters which had come like songs of hope.

We sat in the parlor all that evening singing together, and wishing many times that Anne was there with her sweet contralto voice to make our concert complete. When Mr. Haven said good-night, I laughingly told him I was going to obey her commands, and do my very best to amuse him until she should come; in pledge of which he begged the blue ribbon that bound my hair. I gave it to him, and stood in the door watching him as he went away, with my long, unloosed curls falling almost to the floor.

Days passed so swiftly they seemed like the days of a delicious dream. I never paused to question my foolish heart, which throbbed with new and strange emotions. It was enough that I was happy; yes, so happy I had not a single tear even for my dear mother's grave. But at last there came a letter from Anne announcing her speedy return. Mr. Haven brought it from the office, and we read it together, standing by the west window in the parlor.

"She is a good girl," he mused, after a prolonged silence, absently caressing my hair with his white fingers. "She is a good girl; and so she is coming—when?" He glanced at the date, which was a week old; the letter had been delayed, and even now she might be on her way. I felt his dark magnetic eyes searching my drooping face, and I trembled under their power. "Are you glad, Rose?" he whispered, bending to my ear.

"Glad? Oh yes, I am very glad," I stammered, and burst into tears.

"Rose, you love me," said he, slowly. "I can read your little heart like a page of sweet poetry. You love me, Rose!"

My pride took fire at this.

"And if I did," cried I, "if I did, without thinking or knowing it, I have not forgotten that you are Anne's promised husband!"

"It is true, Rose," he said, gloomily, "that before I went to China I had a youthful liking for Anne, but—" and here his tone changed to one of deep tenderness—"you, little Rose, are the only one I ever loved; the only woman I will marry."

"And so," said I, scornfully, for I was beginning to realize the depth of woe into which I was sinking; "and so, because in your long absence Anne has grown older, and you fear she is less fair and gay, you would cast her off! Ah, Sir, I shall soon learn to despise you!"

"Rose, your angry words bring me to myself," said he, sorrowfully. "Forgive me, child, and tell me how I shall expiate my offense."

"Marry Anne, and never let her know of this."

"Marry Anne! Yes; I will, I will. But pity me, Rose. You *did* love me, little flower?"

This tone of tender beseeching how could my poor heart withstand it? For one moment I forgot Anne, honor, and duty, and flung my arms around his neck, sobbing.

"Rose," he whispered, "dear child, let us tell her all. She is generous; she will forgive; she—"

"Never! never! never!" I wrenched myself from him as I spoke, and turned to fly, when lo! in the centre of the room, rigid and white as a marble statue, I beheld—Anne!

I threw myself into her arms, and she held me there in a brief but kind embrace; then leading me out into the hall, she touched her icy lips to mine, and went back to the parlor, closing the door softly after her.

What passed between her and Ralph in that long interview I never knew; but he left the village at night, and I saw him no more for years.

Anne passed through this furnace of affliction like the holy children, "upon whose bodies the fire had no power." Whatever she suffered was known to God and herself alone. Outwardly, there was not the shadow of change.

Twenty years after all this trouble, as I sat musing over the fire one winter evening, a note was handed me, which read as follows:

"DEAR ROSE,—Come to me.
"RALPH HAVEN."

The lad who brought it was waiting to guide me. I snatched a cloak and hood, and without a question followed him down the street to the village inn; and here I found Ralph Haven—dying—dying! He knew me, notwithstanding my gray hairs (for at eight-and-thirty I was as gray as I am to-day), and he held out his hands to welcome me. I took them both, cold and shrunken as they were, and kissed them.

"Sit down, Rose," he said. "You will stay by me until I die?"

I took the chair proffered by the good landlady, and sat all that night with his dear hands clasped in mine, praying that God would spare him to me yet a little while. But this was not to be. At early dawn he died in my arms, with our dear Lord's name on his quivering lips.

It has been the comfort of my life that I was permitted to be with him when he went down into the valley of the shadow; that my ear caught his last whisper; that no one but I closed his eyes, and smoothed the thin gray locks over his forehead.

Well; the old woman's story is almost done.

I am neither lonely nor miserable. The world looks as bright and fair on this calm October morning as it did forty years ago; but I hope for one which is brighter and fairer, whither my feet are hastening.

Anne and her children and grandchildren come to see me often (for Anne married a good minister, and has reared up a family of girls to imitate her sweet and womanly virtues, and to almost adore their mother). They also love Aunt Rose.

Here, in the old brown house where I was born, where I have lived and loved and suffered, will I die. You will see that I am decently buried, very near my mother and Ralph; and you will not forget to plant a flower over my grave. I have loved them so well I shall like to think they will bloom near me, even when I can no longer see their gentle beauty. And should your tender heart suggest a more enduring monument, let it be a broken shaft (for my life has been incomplete), bearing only my name—

ROSE WESLEY.

SPEECH WITHOUT WORDS.

I'LL tell you a story of how I once saved my life, entirely through having learned the deaf and dumb alphabet:

"There were two little boys who used to come and stay with Frank and me, when we were first married, and they could neither hear nor speak.

"They were deaf and dumb; they could not talk except with their fingers—so—only ever so much quicker.

"Frank and I learned this foreign alphabet on purpose, that we might understand what these two poor lads had to say. They were quick and clever; they could read and write, ay, and draw and sew, and do many other things which most boys would make but a very bad hand at.

"They could play at draughts, and backgammon, and chess, and at fox and geese, as well as any boys. They could almost see what we said, though they could not hear, with such quick eager eyes did they watch every movement of our lips. We soon, however, got to talk as easily with our fingers as our tongues; and sometimes, when the lads were not with us, Frank and I used to converse in that manner when we were alone, for practice.

"It happened upon one occasion that he had to go to London on important business; he was to have gone by an afternoon train, but something delayed him, so that he was not able to leave before the night-express. I was not in very good health, and retired to my bedroom about two hours before his departure; he promised, however, to come up and wish me good-by before he started, which would be between twelve and one o'clock in the morning. The matter which called him away was connected with the bank here, which had just been burned down; and my husband, it seems, though I did not know it at the time—so great a secret had he endeavored to keep it—had many thousand pounds belonging to the concern in his temporary possession, locked up in the iron safe in our bedroom, where the plate was kept. He was bank-manager, and responsible for the whole of it. It was winter-time, and there was a fire in the room, so bright and comfortable that I was in no hurry to leave it and get into bed, but sat up, looking into the fiery coals, and thinking about all sorts of things; upon the long journey Frank had to take that night, and of how dreary the days would seem until he returned; and in particular how lonely I should feel in that great room all by myself, when he would be away; for I was a dreadful coward. It was a little after eleven o'clock when I got into bed, but I did not feel the least inclined for sleep even then; I knew Frank would be coming to wish me good-by presently; and besides, there seemed to be all sorts of noises about the room, which my foolish ears always used to hear whenever I was alone at night-time.

"If a little soot fell down the chimney, it was, I thought, a great black crow at least, which would soon be flying about the room, and settling on my pillow; if a mouse squeaked in the wainscot, it was the creaking of some dreadful person's shoes, coming up stairs to kill me with a carving-knife; and if the wind blew at the casement, it was somebody else trying to get in at the window, although it was two stories high. You may imagine, then, my horror when I heard a tremendous sneeze within a quarter of an inch of me, just behind the head-board of the bed, and between that and the wall, where there was a considerable space. I had, as usual, taken the precaution, before I put the candle out, of looking every where in the room where it was quite impossible any person could be hid; but in the little alcove into which the bed was pushed I had never so much as thought of looking, although that was a capital hiding-place for any body. Ever since I had slept in that room, in short, I had been like the ostrich, who puts his head in the sand, and then imagines himself in perfect security. I had piqued myself upon precautionary measures that, after all, might just as well have been omitted. The only thing, as I believe, which saved my reason from departing altogether, when I first heard that terrible sound, was that my mind clung to the hope that it might be, after all, only the sneeze of a cat. Fifty cats together could not have made half such a disturbance, it is true, for it was the sneeze of a man who sneezes in spite of himself, and almost shook the house;

but the idea sustained me over the first shock. The next instant the wretch had sneezed again, and pushing aside the bed, which rolled on casters, I felt was standing beside my pillow looking at me. If he had only given one sneeze, he might perhaps have believed me, as I lay quite still, breathing as regularly as I could, and pretending to be asleep; but he reasoned, very justly, that, unless I was deaf or dead, I must have been awakened by the second.

"'You're awake, marm,' said he, in a gruff voice, 'and it's no use shamming! If you don't want a tap with this life-preserver, just look alive.'

"I opened my eyes exceedingly wide at this, and beheld a man with crape over his face, standing by the bed; he held a sort of club with two knobs upon it in his right hand, and with his left he pointed to the iron safe. 'Is the money there?' said he.

"'The plate is,' said I, in a trembling voice; 'pray, take it, Sir; I am sure you are very welcome;' for he might have had every thing of value out of the house with all my heart, so long as he left me my life.

"'The money—the gold—the notes—are they there?' cried he again, in a terrible sort of whisper.

"'It's all there,' replied I, although I knew nothing about it; 'all except fifteen-and-sixpence in my purse, on the dressing-table yonder. There's a silver mustard-pot besides in the pantry, and a couple of candlesticks in the study, only they are plated, for I would not deceive you, Sir, upon any account.'

"'You had better not,' observed the burglar, grimly, 'or it will be all the worse for you.' He produced a key like that my husband used, and approached the iron safe; but as he did so, his guilty ear caught a footstep upon the staircase. 'Who's that?' cried he.

"'My husband, Sir,' returned I; 'but, pray, don't hurt him; pray.'

"'Is he not gone to town, then?' cried the ruffian, with an oath of disappointment.

"'He is going at twelve o'clock,' replied I; 'he is indeed.'

"'If you tell him,' said the burglar, hoarsely; 'if you breathe but one word of my presence here, it will be the death-doom of you both;' he had slipped into the alcove, and drawn back the bed again to its place in an instant. My husband entered immediately afterward, and even while he was in the room I heard the awful threat repeated once again through the thick curtain behind me: 'If you do but whisper it, woman, I will kill you where you lie. Will you swear not to tell him?'

"'I will,' said I, solemnly; 'I promise not to open my lips about the matter.'

"Frank leaned over the pillow to kiss me, and observed how terrified I looked.

"'You have been frightening yourself about robbers again, I suppose, you silly child.'

"'Not I, Frank,' returned I, as cheerfully as I could; 'I have only a little headache;' but I said with my fingers, so that he could plainly read it in the fire-light: '*For God's sake, hush! but there's a man behind the bed-head!*'

"Frank was as bold as a lion, and had nerves like iron, although he was so tender-hearted and kind. He only answered, 'Where is your sal-volatile, dearest?' and went to the mantle-piece to get it. I thought he never could have understood me, he spoke with such coolness and unconcern, until I saw his fingers reply as he took up the bottle, '*All right; don't be afraid!*' And then I was not afraid, or at least not much; for I knew that I should not be left one instant in that room alone; and I felt that my Frank was a match for any two men in such a cause. Only he had no weapon. '*He has a life-preserver*,' said I, with my fingers.

"'Your fire is getting rather low, Georgey,' observed he, as he took up the poker. (Ah, he had a weapon then!) 'I must leave you a good blaze to comfort you before I go.' He poked the fire, and left the poker in, but without ever taking his eye off me and the bed-head. 'I will just ring the bell, and see whether Thomas has got the portmanteau ready. Mary,' continued he to the maid that answered the bell, 'send Thomas up.' Then, when she had gone upon that errand, 'By Jove! I never gave him that key. Where is it, Georgey? I have not a minute to lose. If it is in your dressing-case with the rest there, I shall be an age in looking for it. Might I ask you to get out of bed for an instant, and show me which it is?' He said with his fingers, '*Jump!*' and I jumped, you may be sure, quickly enough, and was inside the dressing-room, and with the door locked, in half a second.

"'Come in, Thomas,' said Frank; 'come in.' For Thomas was modestly hesitating at the chamber-door. 'There's some blackguard got into the house and behind my bed there. If he makes the least resistance I'll kill him with this hot poker.'

"At these words the bed was pushed slowly outward, and the burglar, without his crape mask, and with a face as pale as ashes, emerged from his hiding-place. Frank knew him at once as having been a bank-messenger, who had been turned out of his situation since the fire upon suspicion of dishonesty.

"'Oh, Sir, have pity upon me!' cried he; 'I'm an unlucky dog. If it had not been for a sneeze I should have had ten thousand pounds in my pocket by this time!'

"'Oh, you came after *that*, did you?' said my husband, coolly. 'Well, please to give up that life-preserver which you have in your pocket before we have any more conversation.'

"'And did your lady tell you that, too?' cried the villain, in accents of astonishment, as he delivered up the weapon to the man-servant; 'and yet I stood by her yonder, and never heard her utter a syllable.'

"'I never spoke a word,' cried I, through the dressing-room key-hole, for I did not wish the man to think that I had broken my oath, nor, to say truth, was I anxious to make a deadly enemy of him, in case he should be ever at large again.

"'Then it's a judgment on me,' exclaimed the miserable wretch; 'and it's no good for me to fight against it.'

"'It's not the least good,' replied Frank, decisively; 'and we will go to the police-office at once.'

"So off the burglar went in their custody, leaving me safe and sound after all. And now, don't you think there may be some use in learning every thing, even so small a thing as the deaf and dumb alphabet?"

BESSIE MUNRO.

The scene is Hobarton, Australia. It had been a cold rainy day, and now was a damp, cheerless night; for, though the rain had abated, the clouds still looked sulky, and the sky gave no promise of moon or stars to light me home through the bush. So, to be independent of both, I took a lantern and set out. My way lay through the uncomfortable bit of uncleared land, to the left of Newtown. Every now and then I had to draw up before a charred trunk of a tree, and each time, though accustomed to the interruption, the same suspicion presented itself—namely, that a Ranger was advancing to meet me. Nor did my lantern assist me to a full definition of the figure, for in bringing its light to bear upon the trunk the long black arms only seemed to stretch more determinately toward me. Elsewhere such trees might be considered of the ghost-tribe; here, where fears are too much preoccupied to think of supernatural appearances, a charred stump is not only a charred stump, but very often something *more*, especially if it be large and hollow. One to which I was coming was the most awkward of the lot—a thorough specimen of diablerie—on the top of a hideous-looking trunk was perched a large round knot, bearing a resemblance to a human head. All this I knew, and was prepared for; but, in spite of being prepared, my heart and I stood still together before it. The black head wore a feather—a bright red feather—which blew furiously about in the wind. As I watched it, a hand emerged from the hollow and drew it in. Then came a voice from within.

"You can pass on."

I hesitated, when the permission was repeated.

"What are you?" I demanded, recovering my self-possession.

"Never mind, pass on; I'm harmless as yourself."

I glanced at the muzzle of a gun which peered through an aperture in the trunk, and doubted its accordance with peaceable intentions.

"Who are you?" I again demanded.

An answer in person was given; a man jumped out from the hollow and stood beside me.

"Don't let me see you!" I cried out; "don't put it in my power to witness against you."

"Look at me, I am no absconder," he replied.

I looked and saw a tall, grotesque figure, which I immediately recognized as belonging to an old man of Hobarton who gained his living by shooting small game in the neighborhood. He doffed his opossum fur cap, and bowed respectfully when his eyes met mine. I could not help laughing, so ridiculous had been my former fears. He seemed hurt; for, bending on his gun, he said:

"Ah, it's no laughing matter that brings me here! Bessie's my game to-night—poor, fond, young crayture, to leave her father's house, all for a cross word, which he has the right of nayture to speak to her."

He reminded me of King Lear; his long white hair blew about on his head, as the red feather had done from the top of the trunk, and for some moments he was too absorbed in grief to speak, and when he did, it was in short, broken sentences, as though all the world should know his Bessie. I gathered that she had left him a few days ago, and that his suspicions led him to watch for her from this spot.

"That bit of a kerchief," said he, "I stuck out from the pole, for if she passed she'd know it was mine, and meant for peace, and there was a word tied up in it begging her to come back."

He drew the kerchief across his eyes, and in it I acknowledged the former feather. Then, wrapping it around his throat, as if preparing to settle for the night, he bade me leave him. This I objected to do, and told him he was tempting Providence by exposing himself to the damp of the bush.

"Rheumatics take the damp!" he said. Then, fixing a searching eye on me, he added: "Have you ever lost a child? Then I have, and by worse than death. Leave me, and the only favor I beg is, don't notice me when you meet me in town."

"But how about poor Bessie? I must hear if you find her."

"Ay, ay!" he nodded, and coiled himself back into his tree ere I could offer further opposition.

A few days after I saw him in Argyle Street, but forebore to remark him. With my face set steadily in front, I was about to pass by, when he made a full stop before me, took off his fur cap, and waited bareheaded till I should speak.

"Is she found?"

He seemed delighted that I pounced on the subject without preface. It convinced him that Bessie was the all in all engrossing occupation of other thoughts than his.

"She's heard of, and I know her whereabout. I'd rather have seen her dragged dead out of the river! A dead child ain't half the pain of a living one gone astray. A dead child can't come back if she'd fain, therefore a living one that won't is worse!"

A sentiment to which I could not say nay, for the testimony of ages is in its favor.

"Ah! I'm not so much a stranger in the colony," he went on to lament, "as not to know where these things end; and if once the government brown gets upon my Bess, she'll be none the better for it, and there's them as will gladly make her worse, out of spite that she's free to what they are. I tell you, Sir, there ain't been no blot on our family for six generations back, and at home, for all that I'm poor to the back-bone, my word's as good as a bond. If my hands are seared, it's with work, and *not* with dirty actions! And my children was all counted fortunes in themselves; now I'm come out here with the last just to break my heart over her!"

His breast heaved, and what more he would say was lost in a smothered sob. To turn him to a more cheerful view of the case, I said:

"Well, but we must look to the brighter side, it may not be so bad after all."

"Not so bad! Let the worst come to the worst, or the best to the best, ain't she forgotten her Catechism and her Bible? When I was young, I was taught to honor my father and mother. But, I tell you what it is, Sir"—he lowered his voice and spoke confidentially—"come what may, I don't blame the girl too much, for the sin lies at our door. We'd no business, my missus and me, to leave England in our old age—'twas pride from beginning to end. First, I could not trust the God that made me to provide for me when I got old; then, I wanted to see Bessie a lady. They told me that, out here, her bonny face would get her a rich husband, and now it's more like—" He broke short, and then said: "Perhaps you'll step in and see missus, she's in a world of trouble, and it tells hard upon her, poor soul!"

We had all this while been walking, and when we had gone a little farther we came to one of those hut-looking buildings still to be seen here and there in Hobarton. The door of this hut was locked, and Munro had the key in his pocket. Seeing my surprise, he remarked:

"'Twas by her own wish. The neighbors come twitting of her with their pity, so says missus to me, 'Lock me in, John, and then I can't open to none of 'em.'"

We entered a wretched little room, exhibiting every token of poverty and dejection. It looked like a bereaved house, for there was neither sign of a recent fire nor of a mid-day meal, though it was past noon. All this my eye apprehended at a glance, while my attention riveted itself on an old woman who sat with her head buried in her arms, which rested on an open Bible lying before her on a small table.

"Missus," said her husband. But she answered not; she was in a dead sleep, sleeping the heavy sleep of sorrow. "Poor soul," whispered Munro, "I left her fretting over that text—'The way of transgressors is hard.' 'Oh, John!' says she to me, 'will Bessie's case ever come to that?' 'God knows!' says I, and then she laid down her head, and very likely she's staid there since."

He motioned me to sit on a bench, and then, at my invitation, he also sat down, when the silence that ensued gave me an opportunity to make many observations, each of which strengthened my opinion of the poverty of the Munro family.

"Don't let me keep you from your dinner," I said, in order to discover whether he had any in prospect.

He appeared uneasy for an instant; then, with rather a grim smile, he replied, "Sorrow an't an appetiteable sauce."

I strongly suspected that other causes than sorrow kept him from eating, and longed to offer him some money to procure a meal; but there was a certain dignity in the handsome old Englishman that held back my purse, and made me feel that a case of distress can not always be relieved by money. He seemed to read my thoughts, for said he:

"I don't deny it's hard times; and if you were pleased to lend me a loan 'twould be more than a kindness, for I'm sadly gone back along; since Bessie went away, my time's been spent in seeking for her, instead of in bringing down pigeons."

He resolutely refused the trifle I proffered, but finally agreed to receive it as a loan, to be paid in weekly installments of game.

"Well, I'm glad your debt will oblige you to use your gun again, for the exercise will help you to forget your trouble," I unfortunately said, in taking leave of him.

He gave me a look that might have been quizzical but for the tone that accompanied it:

"Them that's got gray hair in their head can't ride the old soldier over trouble in that way."

The following week I found a pair of bronze-wing pigeons and three common parrots lying on the hall table; they were marked "Paid for." Beside them lay a little three-cornered note, which ran thus:

"Honored Sir,—Bessie is loging at the Blk Bear in Golburn Street. She won't see me, but verry like she will speak with a stranger, when you cold tell her that if she don't want this forrin mold to cover her poor old father and mother she will come home again to them that's her tru friends, to say nothing of him that's her God in heaven. So no more from Mr. and Mrs. Munro, from your humble servent, John Munro."

Interpreting this into a request that I would go to Bessie, I set out for the Black Bear, and asked if one Bessie Munro lodged there. After some hesitation it was admitted that she did, but was too ill to see any one. I perceived this to be a falsehood, and was turning in my mind how to accomplish an interview, when a portly, forbidding-looking woman came from behind a large folding screen that divided the tap-room from their private apartment. Not knowing the answer I had already received, she inquired my business; and, on being told, she deliberately stated that Bessie had only that minute "ran out on an arrant." A foolish smile passed from face to face, and taking advantage of the confusion, I said, in a voice of authority, "Will any person have the goodness to call Bessie Munro: I shall begin to think she is detained against her will, unless I hear to the contrary from her own lips."

"And that you sha'n't!" cried the portly woman. "She's a quiet, indefensive lodger, and she sha'n't be defied in my own house. I took pity on her when they that bore her drove her to doors—"

"Hush! no more of such falsehoods. You know Bessie's history as well as I do," I said: on which the woman dashed like a tempest behind the screen, and, led by an irresistible impulse, I followed her into the private room. There, standing on tip-toe, and listening with every eager feature, was one of the most beautiful young women I have ever seen. Possession was in my favor; so having obtained a footing I kept it, in spite of the landlady's abuse. I advanced to the young woman, and said:

"You need not tell me you are Bessie Munro; your likeness to your father has already told me that. I am come to beg you to return to your home; both your parents are willing to forgive you: it is in your power to make them very happy again."

"Oh, Sir! I could never face them again; mother might forgive me, but father says he'll break his gun across my shoulders if ever I darken his hut again."

"It's a lie!" I had cried before I could refrain; and then, to vindicate the assertion, I read Bessie her father's note. She wept bitterly.

"Oh, Sir, the madness of the first wrong step!" she choked out between her tears.

"It is a madness more curable than the second step: take it in hand at once, Bessie; I am willing to help you."

"Thank you, Sir; but, I assure you, till this moment I've refused to see my father because I heard he only wanted to see me to disgrace me, and of course I've too much pride for that."

"There!" injected the living tempest blowing at us from the corner. "There!" The tone seemed to mean, "Are you satisfied now you've heard for yourself?" But unheeding its fury, I went on to implore the unhappy girl to go back with me.

She then said: "At any rate, Sir, it's quite true that he hid out in the bush to shoot me if I went along."

"Yes, that's as true as Gospel. My maister saw him lying out by Newtown, and, says he, 'Why, Munro, what be doing here this time o' day? there's no game flying now.' 'Old Nick take the game,' says he, 'I be out after that girl.'"

I recounted the story of my first interview with Munro, and Bessie again melted to tears. She seemed truly miserable, between a sense of duty and affection on the one side, and indecision and fear on the other. At last she exclaimed: "Do beg her to let me go!"

"Beg her! She can't detain you: what claim has she on you?"

"Ay, tell him what? But I don't want you: go and see how clever it is to get back a lost character!"

"Who dares to say I've lost my character?" cried Bessie, indignantly.

"We shall see! One doesn't go into government to learn nothin', I suppose?" sneered the landlady.

"Come, come, I'm not here to listen to quarrels. Bessie, bethink yourself; will you go with me?"

"It requires resolution," she said, shrinkingly.

"And for the want of that will you be guilty of a crime?"

"Give me time, Sir—give me time," she hurriedly replied; and with that unsatisfactory result I was obliged to depart. Poor foolish young creature! she perceived not the toils thickening about her; and for one wild freak of temper was likely to incur a fearful penalty.

I called several times at the Black Bear, but without success; she was never to be seen, and I had almost given up all hope of a second interview, when one day, in returning through my former route, who should I espy but Bessie sitting on the very trunk where I had first met her father.

"You, Bessie! It looks bad to see you out this time of night."

"I am waiting for you, Sir: I've never been able to find out your name, nor where you live; and as I saw you go up along, I tried to run after you, but as I couldn't overtake you, I rested here till you came back."

"And what do you want of me, Bessie?" I spoke curtly and somewhat austerely, in order to set a due value on my services and due censure on her obstinacy.

"I want you to tell them, Sir, not to be uneasy after me: for there's no manner of call for it, I'm as respectable as when I left the hut."

"Bessie, you are both willful and rebellious; do you call that respectable? If you are saved from destruction it will be in spite of yourself. What does a young woman expect if she stays out to such an hour? look, it is eight o'clock, a fair hour for England, but not for out here." I showed her my watch by the lamp-light, she glanced at it, and blushed deeply.

"Sir, I will tell you all, and you'll see I'm not so bad. I don't wish to go back to father and mother till I can repay them for the trouble I've cost 'em, and that I hope to do soon, for I'm engaged to Joe Sadlers, a successful digger; I've kept honest company with him, and he'll marry me after a bit; he's gone up the country now this very evening to see about settling near Longford, and when he comes back 'twill be so pleasant, and I shall go straight to father."

I knew enough of diggers to make me tremble for her; but to shake her faith in her betrothed was impossible. Joe Sadlers was not a digger of the common order: others might betray her, he never. We walked and talked till we reached the main road; there Bessie discovered that she had left her handkerchief at the tree. I told her it was not worth returning for, but she confessed that she had also left her lover's last letter there—and *that* she could not think of losing.

I could neither dissuade her from returning nor accompany her back, as urgent business bade me go forward; but she seemed to have no fear of being left, and cheerily wished me good-night.

Two days afterward, I was passing the court of justice, with a little spare time at command, and being somewhat of a hanger-on at these places, I entered to hear what might be on. I had no sooner set foot in the court, than a female voice screeched out:

"There he is! there he is! He'll tell where I was at eight o'clock on Tuesday evening;" then stretching her arms toward me, she cried, "Save me! save me, Sir!"

When the commotion consequent on this outcry had ceased, it was explained to me that Bessie was apprehended on suspicion of having stolen the cash-box of the Black Bear till, which was safe at eight o'clock, and missing ten minutes after. The suspicion was the greater from the fact of the empty box having been secreted in the trunk of a tree from the direction of which she had been traced. Being duly sworn, I gave evidence, and the result was an *alibi* too clearly proved for disputation. I led her from the court; and when we got free of the crowd I asked where she meant to go. She turned a bright, tearful look on me, as much as to say, can you ask; so I shook her hand, and departed; for there are scenes where a stranger should not intermeddle, and such a one I knew would take place in the hut. But in an hour my curiosity overcame my judgment, and I found myself tapping for admittance at Munro's. He opened the door, stared at me, and then turned his head, while I entered; but we neither of us spoke. Bessie knelt by her mother, bathing her withered hand in contrite tears, and Munro commenced a desperate rattling of knives and forks, while his wife looked up with a face of grateful gladness. I could form no words befitting so tender a scene, so took up the Bible and read the parable of the prodigal son. They bore it with firmness until I reached the 23d verse: "Bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive," etc.; when the father burst out:

"Us hadn't got no fatted calf; but mother's boiled her best bit of pork, and with HER here to eat it, it's a feast fit for angels."

Bessie needed not another warning that her father's roof was her safest shelter, nor did she again leave it until a fine young husband took her home to a snug little farm in the interior. But this husband was not Joe Sadlers; of him my suspicion proved correct; he was a villain, and at the time of Bessie's marriage he was fulfilling a sentence on the roads for the robbery at the Black Bear.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW.

'Tis the dead of the night, and the city
Lies silent and dark as the tomb;
While the murmuring waters of Seine
Rush on through the mist and the gloom.

All is still, not a sound to be heard,
Not a light overhead or below;
The town seems deserted by all
Save the sentries who pace to and fro.

Save that of their long-measured tread
No sound do the echoes repeat,
And they grasp their sword-hilts and converse
In the midst of the desolate street.

"Good-even, my comrade! Hast heard
The glorious news that is come?
Of the feast that our king hath prepared,
Of the dance to the beat of the drum

"To which we are soon to lead forth
The Calvinist daughters of France?
They will not refuse us;" he laughed,
As he eyed the sharp point of his lance.

"Sleep, husbands! sleep on while ye may,
Secure by the side of your wives;
Such a waking ere long you will see
As but once in a lifetime arrives.

"Oh mothers of heretic babes!
Go fold them once more in your arms;
And, lovers, caress while ye may
The beauties that yield you their charms.

"For e'en now," as he spoke, a wild sound
Smote dread on the ear of the night,
'Twas so like the last trumpet of doom,
That the sepulchres gaped with affright,

And the souls of the damned found their way
For a season to earth, and became
The leaders of sport for the night,
And cheer'd on the hounds to the game.

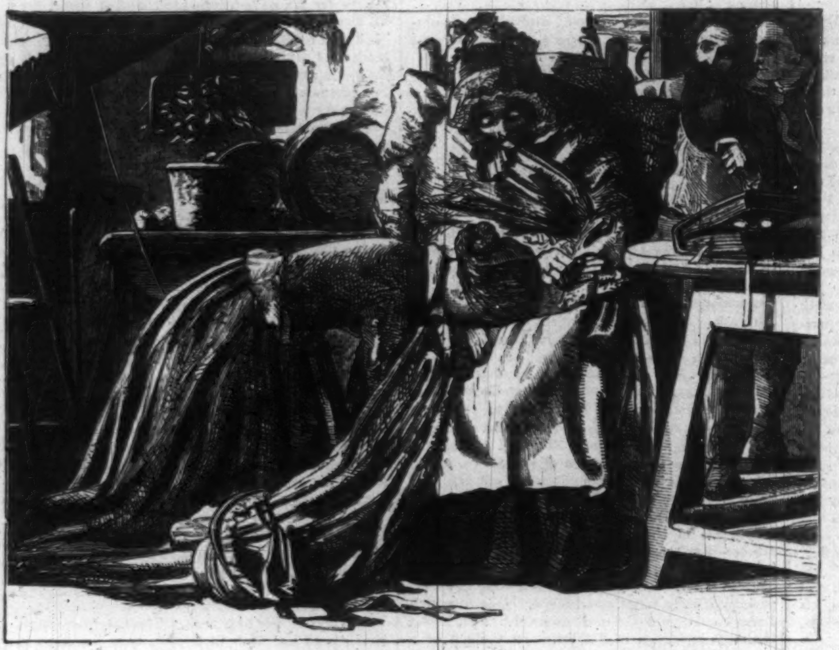
The call of Religion is heard,
And the soldiers of Jesus arise,
And rush to the slaughter with hate
In their hearts, and with lust in their eyes.

Who babbles of mercy? Behold,
This night 'tis forbidden to spare;
For the hour is come, long appointed,
The sword of Jehovah is bare.

The angels shall weep as they see
How our Catholic chivalry greet
The women that kneel in their anguish,
And helpless for mercy entreat.

And the scent of the blood and the burning
Like incense shall climb to the stars
That ride in the vault of the heaven,
Remote from this earth and its wars.

For to-night is the Lord's, and his vengeance
Shall redden the waters of Seine;
Let the reapers go forth to the harvest,
And gather this Huguenot grain.



AT HOME ONCE MORE.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the Year 1860, by Harper & Brothers, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

TRUMPS.

BY GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS.

CHAPTER XCVI.

GETTING READY.

HOPE WAYNE read of Abel Newt's success. In the constant employment of her life she had long ago ceased to think of him, except with profound pity. Sometimes, indeed, he seemed to her like a stately ship "built in the eclipse and rigged with curses dark," which she dimly saw driving through lurid light upon sudden reefs. But her life was so busy with the thousand nameless duties of her position as a rich, unmarried woman, that she was too deeply engaged with what she had to do to speculate about what she might have done.

The threat which Abel had vaguely thrown out she had not forgotten; but she supposed it was only an expression of disappointment and indignation. Could she have seen him a few evenings after the ball and his conversation with Mrs. Delilah Jones, she might have thought differently.

He sat with the same woman in the same room.

"To-morrow, then?" she said, looking at him, hesitatingly.

"To-morrow," he answered, grimly.

"I hope all will go well."

"All what?" he said, roughly.

"All our plans."

"Abel Newt was not born to fail," he replied; "or at least General Belch said so."

His companion had no knowledge of what Abel really meant to do. She only knew that he was capable of every thing, and she feared every thing but the very worst.

They sat together silently for a long time. He poured freely and drank deeply, and whiffed cigar after cigar nervously away. The few bells of the city tolled the hours. Ele had come during the evening and knocked at the door, but Abel did not let him in. He and his companion sat silently, and heard the few bells strike.

"Well, Kitty," he said at last, thickly, and with glazing eye. "Well, my Princess of the Mediterranean. We shall be happy, hey? You're not afraid even now, hey?"

"Oh, we shall be very happy," she replied, in a low, wild tone, as if it were the night wind that moaned, and not a woman's voice.

He looked at her for a few moments. He saw how entirely she was enthralled by him.

"I wonder if I care any thing about you?" he said, at length, leering at her through the cigar-smoke.

"I don't think you do," she answered, meekly.

"But my—my—dear Mrs. Jones—the su-superb Mrs. Dalilah Jo-Jones, ought to be sure that I do. Here, bring me a light: that dam—dam— cigar's gone out."

She rose quietly and carried the candle to Abel. There was an inexpressible weariness and pathos in all her movements: a kind of womanly tranquillity that was touchingly at variance with the impression of her half-coarse appearance. As Abel watched her he remembered the women whom he had tried to marry. His memory scoured through his whole career. He thought of them all variously happy.

"I swear! to think I should come to you!" he said at length, looking at his companion, with an indescribable bitterness of sneering.

Kitty Dunham sat at a little distance from him on the end of a sofa. She was bowed as if deeply thinking; and when she heard these words her head sank a little more, as if a palpable weight had been laid upon her. She understood perfectly what he meant.

"Perhaps I can help you in some way," she said, in the same low voice. "If you are ill, some day, I can nurse you. I shall be poor company on the long journey, but I will try."

"What long journey?" asked Abel, suddenly and angrily.

"Where we are going," she replied, gently.

"D— it, then, don't use such am-am-big-'us phrases. A man would think we were go-going to die."

She said no more, but sat, half-crouching, upon the sofa, looking into the fire. Abel glanced at her, from time to time, with maudlin grins and sneers.

"Go to bed," he said, at length; "I've something to do. Sleep all you can; you'll need it. I shall stay 'till I'm ready to go: and come for you in the morning."

"Thank you," she answered, and rose quietly. "Good-night!" she said.

"Oh! good-night, Mrs. De-de-liah — superb Jo-Jones!"

He laughed as she went—sat ogling the fire for a little while, and then unsteadily, but not unconsciously, drew a pocket-book from his pocket and took out a small package. It contained several notes, amounting to not less than a hundred thousand dollars signed by himself, and indorsed by Lawrence Newt & Co.—at least the name was there, and it was a shrewd eye that could detect the difference between the signature and that which was every day seen and honored in the street.

Abel looked at them carefully, and leered and glared upon them as if they had been windows through which he saw something—sunny isles, and unbroken ease, and a handsome slave who loved him to minister to every whim.

"'Tis a pretty game," he said, half aloud; "a droll turn-about is life. Uncle Lawrence plays against other people, and wins. I play against Uncle Lawrence, and win. But what's un-dred—sousand—to—him?"

He said it drowsily, and his hands unconsciously fell. He was asleep in his chair.

He sat there sleeping until the gray of morning. Kitty Dunham, coming into the room ready dressed for a journey, found him there. She was frightened; for he looked as if he were dead. Going up to him she shook him, and he awoke heavily.

"What the h—'s the matter?" said he, as he opened his sleepy eyes.

"Why, it's time to go."

"To go where?"

"To be happy," she said, standing passively and looking in his face.

He roused himself, and said:

"Well, I'm all ready. I've only to stop at my room for my trunk."

His hair was tangled, his eyes were bloodshot, his clothes tumbled and soiled.

"Wouldn't you like to dress yourself?" she asked.

"Why, no; ain't I dressed enough for you? No gentleman dresses when he's going to travel."

She said no more. The carriage came as Abel had ordered, a private conveyance to take them quite through to New York. All the time before it came Kitty Dunham moved solemnly about the room, seeing that nothing was left. The solemnity fretted Abel.

"What are you so sober about?" he asked, impatiently.

"Because I am getting ready for a long journey," she answered, tranquilly.

"Perhaps not so long," he said, sharply—"not if I choose to leave you behind."

"But you won't."

"How do you know?"

"Because you will want somebody, and I'm the only person in the world left to you."

She spoke in the same sober way. Abel knew perfectly well that she spoke the truth, but he had never thought of it before. Was he then going so long a journey without a friend, unless she went with him? Was she the only one left of all the world?

As his mind pondered the question his eye fell upon a newspaper of the day before, in which he saw his name. He took it up mechanically, and read a paragraph praising him and his speech; foretelling "honor and troops of friends" for a young man who began his public career so brilliantly.

"There; hear this!" said he, as he read it aloud, and looked at his companion. "'Troops of friends,' do you see? and yet you talk of being my only dependence in the world! Fie! fie! Mrs. Delilah Jones."

It was melancholy merriment. He did not smile, and the woman's face was quietly sober.

"For the present, then, Mr. Speaker and fellow-citizens," said Abel Newt, waving his hand as he saw that every thing was ready, and that the carriage waited only for him and his companion, "I bid these scenes adieu! For the present I terminate my brief engagement. And you, my fellow-members, patterns of purity and pillars of truth, farewell! Disinterested patriots, I leave you my blessing! Pardon me that I prefer the climate of the Mediterranean to that of the District, and the smiles of my Kitty to the intelligent praises of my country. Friends of my soul, farewell! I kiss my finger-tips! Boo—hoo!"

He made a mock bow, and smiled upon an imaginary audience. Then offering his arm with grave ceremony to his companion as if a crowd had been looking on, he went down stairs.

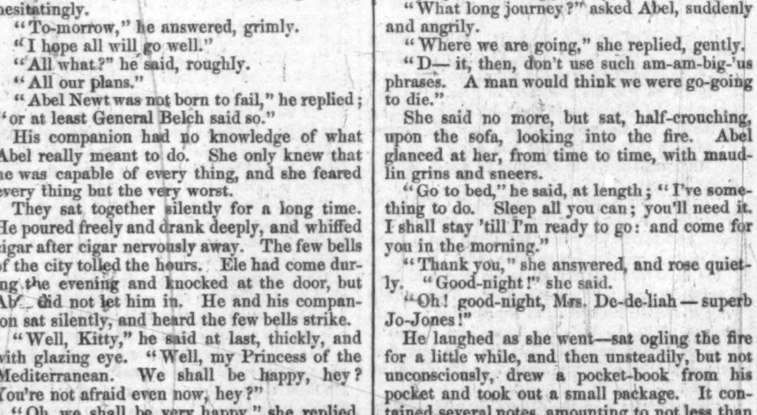
CHAPTER XCVII.

IN THE CITY.

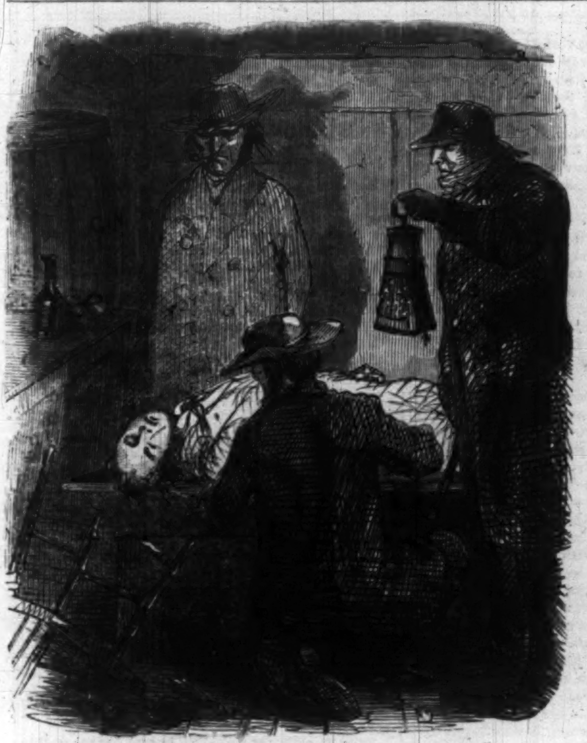
IT was a long journey. They stopped at Baltimore, at Philadelphia, and pushed on toward New York. While they were still upon the way Hope Wayne saw what she had been long expecting to see—and saw it without a solitary regret. Amy Waring was Amy Waring no longer; and Hope Wayne was the first who kissed Mrs. Lawrence Newt. Even Mrs. Simeoe looked benignantly upon the bride; and Aunt Martha wept over her as over her own child.

The very day of the wedding Abel Newt and his companion arrived at Jersey City. Leaving Kitty in a hotel, he crossed the river, and ascertained that the vessel on which he had taken two berths under a false name was full and ready, and would sail upon her day. He showed himself in Wall Street, carefully dressed, carefully sober—mindful, evidently, people said, of his new position; and they thought his coming home showed that he was on good terms with his family, and that he was really resolved to behave himself.

For a day or two he showed himself in the business streets and offices, and talked gravely of public measures. General Belch was confounded by the cool sobriety and superiority and ceremony of the Honorable Mr. Newt. When he made a joke, Abel laughed with such politeness that the General was frightened, and



"THIS NIGHT 'TIS FORBIDDEN TO SPARE."—[BY MILLAIS.]



GONE UPON HIS LONG JOURNEY.

felt dismal, and tried no more. When he treated Abel familiarly, and told him what a jolly lift his speech had given to their common cause—the Grant—the Honorable Mr. Newt replied, with a cold bow, that he was glad if he had done his duty and satisfied his constituents; bowing so coldly that the General was confounded. He spat into his fire, and said, "The Devil!"

When Abel had gone General Belch was profoundly conscious that King Log was better than King Stork, and thought regretfully of the Honorable Watkins Bodley.

After a day or two the Honorable Mr. Newt went to his Uncle Lawrence's office. Abel had not often been there. He had never felt himself to be very welcome there; and as he came into the inner room where Lawrence and Gabriel sat, they were quite as curious as he. Abel bowed politely, and said he could not help congratulating his uncle upon the news he had heard, but would not conceal his surprise. What his surprise was he did not explain; but Lawrence very well knew. Abel had the good sense not to mention the name of Hope Wayne, and not to dwell upon any subject that involved feeling. He said that he hoped by-gones would be by-gones; that he had been a wild boy, but that a career now opened upon him of which he hoped to prove worthy.

"There was a time, Uncle Lawrence," he said, "when I despised your warning; now I thank you for it."

A man who has been but three days married to the woman he loves is then kindly, if he ever is. But Lawrence Newt was never otherwise. He held out his hand to Abel.

"Honesty is the best policy, at least, if nothing more," he said, smiling. "You have a chance; I hope with all my heart you will use it well."

There was little more to say, and of that little Gabriel Bennet said nothing. Abel spoke of public affairs; and after a short time he took leave.

"Can the leopard change his spots?" said Gabriel, looking at the senior partner.

"A bad man may become better," was all the answer; and the two merchants were busy again.

Returning to Wall Street, the Honorable Abel Newt met Mr. President Van Boozenberg. They shook hands, and the old gentleman said, warmly,

"I see ye goin' into your Uncle Lawrence's, a while ago, as I was comin' along South Street. Mr. Abel, Sir, I congratilate ee, Sir. I've read your speech, and I sez to ma, sez I, I'd no idee of it; none at all. Ma, sez she, Law, pa! I allers knowed Mr. Abel Newt would turn up trumps. You allers did have the women, Mr. Newt; and so I told ma."

"I am very glad, Sir, that I have at last done something to deserve your approbation. I trust I shall not forfeit it. I have led rather a gay life, and careless; and my poor father and I have met with misfortunes. But they open a man's eyes, Sir; they are angels in disguise, as the poet says. I don't doubt they have been good for me. At least I'm resolved now to be steady and industrious; and I certainly should be a great fool if I were not."

"Sartin, Sir, with your chances and prospects, yes, and your talents, coz, I allers said to ma, sez I, he's got talent if he hain't nothin' else. I suppose your Uncle Lawrence won't be so shy of you now, hey? No, of course not. A man who has a smart nevy in Congress has a tap in a good barrel."

And Mr. Van Boozenberg laughed loudly at his own humor.

"Why, yes, Sir. I think I may say that the pleasantest part of my new life—if you will allow me to use the expression—is my return to the friends best worth having. I think I have learned, Sir, that steady-going business, with no nonsense about it, is the permanent thing. It isn't flopdoddle, Sir, but it's solid food."

"Tonguey," tho't old Jacob Van Boozenberg, "but vastly improved. Has come to terms with Uncle Lawrence. Sensible fellow!"

"I think he takes it," said Abel to himself, with the feeling of an angler, as he watched the other.

Just before they parted Abel took out his pocket-book and told Mr. Van Boozenberg that he should like to negotiate a little piece of paper which was not altogether worthless, he believed.

Smiling as he spoke, he handed a note for twenty-five thousand dollars, with his uncle's indorsement, to the President. The old gentleman looked at it carefully, and asked Abel to walk with him to the bank. They chatted as they passed along, nodded to those they knew, while some bowed politely to the young member whom they saw in such good company.

"Well, well," said Mr. Zephyr Wetherley as he skimmed up Wall Street from the bank, where he had been getting dividends, "I didn't think to see the day when Abel Newt would be a solid, sensible man."

And Mr. Wetherley wondered, in a sighing way, what was the secret of Abel's success.

The honorable member came out of the bank with the money in his pocket. When the clock struck three he had the amount of all the notes in the form of several bills of foreign exchange.

He went hastily to the river side and crossed to Jersey City.

"They have sent to say that the ship sails at nine in the morning, and that we must be on board early," said Kitty Dunham, as he entered the room.

"I am all ready," he replied, in a clear, cold, alert voice. "Now sit down."

His tone was not to be resisted. The woman seated herself quietly and waited.

"My affectionate Uncle Lawrence has given me a large sum of money, and recommends traveling for my health. The money is in bills on London and Paris. To-morrow morning we sail. We post to London—get the money; same day to Paris—get the money; straight on to Marseilles, and sail in a felucca for Sicily. There we can take breath."

He spoke rapidly, but calmly. She heard and understood every word.

"I wish we could sail to-night," she said.

"Plenty of time—plenty of time," answered Abel. "And why be so anxious for so long a journey?"

"It seems long to you, too?"

"Why, yes; it will be long. Yes, I am going on a long journey."

He smiled with the hard black eyes a hard black smile. Kitty did not smile; but she took his hand gently.

"Do you remember the old Grand Street days, Abel? It was different then, wasn't it? But I love you now."

She paused a moment, then continued:

"I am not happy, but I love you."

Abel shook his head, mockingly.

"My dear, superb Mrs. Delilah Jones, you overcome me with your sentimental speeches. I don't believe in love. That's what I believe in," said he, as he opened his pocket-book and showed her the bills.

The woman looked at them unmoved.

"Those are the delicate little keys of the Future and Happiness," chuckled Abel, as he gloated over the paper.

The woman raised her eyes and looked into his. They were busy with the bills. Then with the same low tone, as if the wind were wailing, she asked,

"Abel, tell me, before we go upon this long journey, don't you love me in the least?"

Her voice sank into an almost inaudible whisper.

Abel turned and looked at her, gayly.

"Love you? Why, woman, what is love? No, I don't love you. I don't love any body. But that's no matter. You shall go with me as if I did. You know, as well as I do, that I can't whine and sing silly. I'll be your friend, and you'll be mine, and this shall be the friend of both," said he, as he raised the bills in his hands.

She sat beside him silent, and her eyes were hot and dry, not wet with tears. There was a look of woe in her face so touching and appealing that, when Abel happened to see it, he said, involuntarily,

"Come, come, don't be silly."

The evening came, and the Honorable Mr. Newt rose and walked about the room.

"How slowly the time passes!" he said, pettishly. "I can't stand it."

It was nine o'clock. Suddenly he sprang up from beside Kitty Dunham, who was silently working.

"No," said he, "I really can not stand it. I'll run over to town, and be back by midnight. I do want to see the old place once more before that long journey," he added, with emphasis, as he put on his coat and hat. He ran out of the room, and was just going out of the house when he heard a muffled voice calling to him from up stairs.

"Why, Kitty, what is it?" he asked, as he stopped.

There was no answer. Alarmed for a moment, he leaped up the stairs. She stood waiting for him at the door of the room.

"Well!" exclaimed he, hastily.

"You forgot to kiss me, Abel," she said.

He took her by the shoulders, and looked at her before him. In her eyes there were pity and gentleness and love.

"Fool!" he said, half-pleased, half-vexed—kissed her, and rushed out into the street.

CHAPTER XCVIII.

A LONG JOURNEY.

ABEL NEWT ran to the ferry and crossed. Then he gained Broadway, and sauntered into one of the hells that were in Park Row. It was bright and full, and he saw many an old friend. They nodded to him, and said, "Ah! back again!" and he smiled, and said a man must not be too virtuous all at once.

So he ventured a little, and won; ventured a little more, and lost. Ventured a little more, and won again; and lost again.

Then came supper, not profuse and splendid, but sufficient; and plenty of wine flowed freely. Old friends must pledge in bumpers.

To work again, and the bells' striking midnight. Win, lose; lose, win; win, win, lose, lose, lose, lose, lose, lose.

Abel Newt smiled: his face was red, his eyes glaring.

"I've played enough," he said; "the luck's against me!"

He passed his hands rapidly through his hair.

"Cash I can not pay," he said; "but here is my I O U, and a check of my Uncle Lawrence's in the morning. For I have no account, you know."

His voice was rough. It was two o'clock in the morning; and the lonely woman he had left sat waiting and wondering: stealing to the front door and straining her eyes into the night: stealing softly back again to press her forehead against the window: and the quiet hopelessness of her face began to be pricked with terror.

"Good-night, gentlemen," said Abel, huskily and savagely.

There was a laugh around the table at which he had been playing.

"Takes it hardly, now that he's got money," said one of his old cronies. "He's made up with Uncle Lawrence, I hear. Hope he'll come often, hey?" he said to the bank.

The bank smiled vaguely, but did not reply.

It was after two, and Abel burst into the street. He had been drinking brandy, and the fires were lighted within him. Pulling his hat heavily upon his head, he moved unsteadily along the street toward the ferry. The night was starry and still. There were few passers in the street; and no light but that which shone at some of the corners, the bad, red eye that lures to death. The night air struck cool upon his face and into his lungs. His head was light. He reeled.

"Mus ha' some drink," he said, thickly.

He stumbled, and pitched into the nearest shop. There was a counter, with large yellow barrels behind it; and a high blind, behind which two or three rough-looking men were drinking. In the window there was a sign, "Liquors, pure as imported."

Abel tried to stand erect, to look dignified, to smooth himself into apparent sobriety. He vaguely hoped to give the impression that he was a gentleman belated upon his way home, and taking a simple glass for comfort. The place was dingy and cold. The guests were huddled about a stove; and their hard, cadaverous faces and sullen eyes turned no welcome upon Abel when he entered, but they looked at him quickly, as if they suspected him to be a policeman or magistrate, and as if they had reason not to wish to see either. But in a moment they saw it was not a sober man, whoever he was.

"Why, Dick, don't yer know him?" said one, in a low voice, to his neighbor.

"No, d— him! and don't want to."

"I do, though," replied the first man, still watching the new-comer curiously.

"Why, Jim, who in h— is it?" asked Dick.

"That air man's our representative. That ain't nobody else but Abel Newt."

"Well," muttered Jim, sullenly, as he surveyed the general appearance of Abel as he stood drinking a glass of brandy—"pure as imported"—at the counter, "well, we've done lots for him: what's he going to do for us? We've put that man up tremendious high; d'ye think he's going to kick away the ladder?"

He half grumbled to himself, half asked his neighbor Dick. They were both a little drunk, and very surly.

"I dunno. But he's vastly high and mighty—that I know; and, by ——, I'll tell him so!" said Dick, energetically clasping his hands, bringing one of them down upon the bench on which he sat, and clenching every word with an oath.

"Hallo, Jim! let's make him give us somethin' to drink!"

The two constituents approached the representative whose election they had so ardently supported.

"Well, Newt, how air ye?"

Abel Newt was confounded at being accosted in such a place at such an hour. He raised his heavy eyes, as he leaned unsteadily against the counter, and saw two beetle-browed, square-faced, disagreeable-looking men looking at him with half-drunken, sullen insolence.

"Hallo, Newt! how air ye?" repeated Jim, as he confronted the representative.

Abel looked at him with shaking head, indignant and scornful.

"Who the devil are you?" he asked, at length, blurring the words as he spoke, and endeavoring to express supreme contempt.

"We're the men that made yer!" retorted Dick, in a shrill, tipsy voice.

The liquor-seller, who was leaning upon his counter, was instantly alarmed. He knew the signs of impending danger. He hurried round, and said,

"Come, come; I'm going to shut up! Time to go home; time to go home!"

The three men at the counter did not move. As they stood facing each other the animal fury kindled more and more fiercely in each one of them.

"We're Jim and Dick, and Ned's asleep yonder on the bench; and we're come to drink a glass with yer, Honorable Abel Newt!" said Dick, in a sneering tone. "It's we what did your business for ye. What'yer going to do for us?"

There was a menacing air in his eye as he glanced at Abel, who felt himself quiver with impotent, blind rage.

"I dun—dun—no ye!" he said, with maudlin dignity.

The men pressed nearer.

"Time to go home! Time to go home!" quavered the liquor-seller; and Ned opened his eyes, and slowly raised his huge frame from the bench.

"What's the row?" asked he of his comrades.

"The Honorable Abel Newt's the row," said Jim, pointing at him.

There was something peculiarly irritating to Abel in the pointing finger. Holding by the counter, he raised his hand and struck at it.

Ned rolled his body off the bench in a moment.

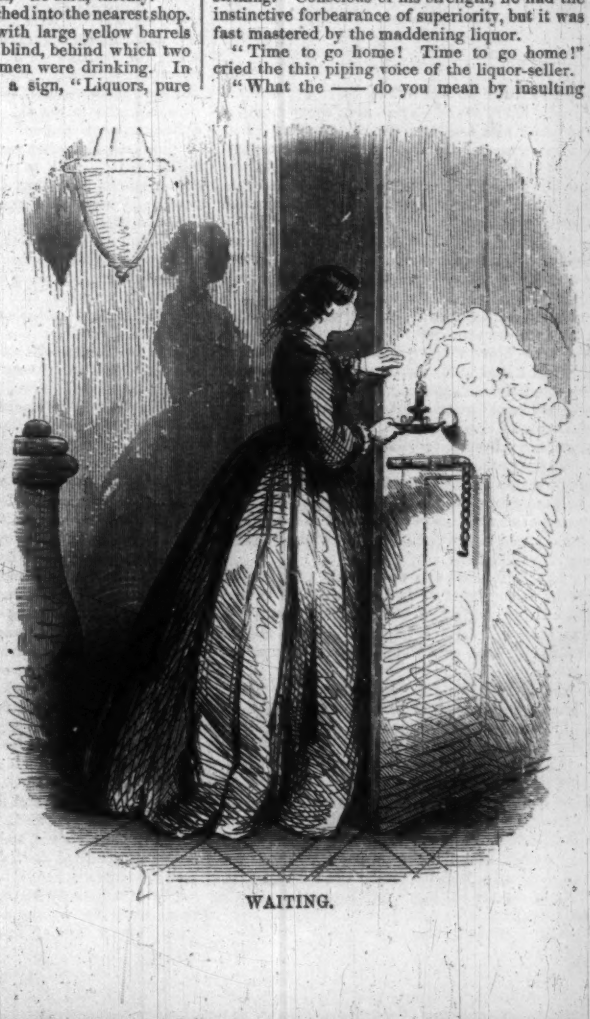
"For God's sake!" gasped the little liquor-seller.

Jim and Dick stood hesitatingly, glaring at Abel. Jim struck his teeth together. Ned joined them, and they surrounded Abel.

"What in —— do you mean by striking me, you drunken pig?" growled Jim, but not yet striking. Conscious of his strength, he had the instinctive forbearance of superiority, but it was fast mastered by the maddening liquor.

"Time to go home! Time to go home!" cried the thin piping voice of the liquor-seller.

"What the —— do you mean by insulting



WAITING.

my friend?" half hiccuped Dick, shaking his head threateningly, and stiffening his arm and fist at his side as he edged toward Abel.

The hard black eyes of Abel Newt shot sullen fire. His rage half sobered him. He threw his head with the old defiant air, tossing the hair back. The human beauty flashed for an instant through the ruin that had been wrought in his face, and kindling into a wild, glittering look of wrath, his eye swept them all as he struck heavily forward.

"Time to go home! Time to go home!" came the cry again, unheeded, unheard.

There was a sudden, fierce, brutal struggle. The men's faces were human no longer, but livid with bestial passion. The liquor-seller rushed into the street, and shouted aloud for help. The cry rang along the dark, still houses, and startled the drowsy, reluctant watchmen on their rounds. They sprang their rattles.

"Murder! murder!" was the cry, which did not disturb the neighbors, who were heavy sleepers, and accustomed to noise and fighting.

"Murder! murder!" It rang nearer and nearer as the watchmen hastened toward the corner. They found the little man standing at his door, bareheaded, and shouting,

"My God! my God! they've killed a man—they've killed a man!"

"Stop your noise, and let us in. What is it?"

The little man pointed back into his dim shop. The watchmen saw only the great yellow round tanks of the liquor pure as imported, and pushed in behind the blind. There was no one there; a bench was overturned, and there were glasses upon the counter. No one there? One of the watchmen struck something with his foot, and, stooping, touched a human body. He started up.

"There's a man here."

He did not say dead, or drunk; but his tone said every thing.

One of them ran to the next doctor, and returned with him after a little while. Meanwhile the others had raised the body. It was yet warm. They laid it upon the bench.

"Warm still. Stunned, I reckon. I see no blood, except about the face. Well dressed. What's he doing here?" The doctor said so as he felt the pulse. He carefully turned the body over, examined it every where, looked earnestly at the face, around which the matted hair clustered heavily:

"He has gone upon his long journey," said the young doctor, in a low, solemn tone, still looking at the face, with an emotion of sad sympathy, for it was a face that had been very handsome; and it was a young man, like himself. The city bells clanged three.

"Who is it?" he asked.

Nobody knew.

"Look at his handkerchief."

They found it, and handed it to the young doctor. He unrolled it, holding it smooth in his hands; suddenly his face turned pale; the tears burst into his eyes. A curious throng of recollections and emotions overpowered him. His heart ached as he leaned over the body; and laying the matted hair away, he looked long and earnestly into the face. In that dim moment in the liquor-shop, by that bruised body, how much he saw! A play-ground loud with boys—wide-branching elms—a country church—a placid pond. He heard voices, and summer hymns, and evening echoes; and all the images and sounds were soft, and pensive, and remote.

The doctor's name was Greenwich—James Greenwich, and he had known Abel Newt at school.

CHAPTER XCIX.

WAITING.

The woman he had left sat quivering and appalled. Every sound started her; every moment she heard him coming. Rocking to and fro in the lonely room, she dropped into sudden sleep—saw him—started up—cried, "How could you stay so?" then sat broad awake, knew that she had dozed but for a moment, and that she was alone.

"Abel, Abel!" she moaned, in yearning agony. "But he kissed me before he went," she thought, wildly—"he kissed me—he kissed me!"

Lulled for a moment by the remembrance she sank into another brief nap—saw him as she had seen him in his gallant days, and heard him say, I love you. "How could you stay so?" she cried, dreaming—started—sprang up erect, with her head turned in intense listening. There was a sound this time; yes, across the river she heard the solemn city bells strike three.

Wearily pacing the room—stealthily, that she might make no noise—walking the hours away, the lonely woman waited for her lover. The winter wind rose and wailed about the windows and moaned in the chimney, and in long, shrieking sobs died away.

"Abel! Abel!" she whispered, and started at the strangeness of her voice. She opened the window softly and looked out. The night was cold and calm again and the keen stars twinkled. She saw nothing—she heard no sound.

She closed it again, and paced the room. There were no tears in her eyes; but they were wide open, startled, despairing. For the first time in her terrible life she had loved.

"But he kissed me before he went," she said, pleadingly, to herself; "he kissed me—he kissed me!"

She said it when the solemn city bells struck three. She said it when the first dim light of dawn stole into the chamber. And when the full day broke, and she heard the earliest foot-falls in the street, her heart clung to it as the only memory left to her of all her life:

"He kissed me! he kissed me!"

CHIPS'S GHOST STORY.

"In the year twenty-six," said Chips, "just when I was out of my time, I took it into my head to go whaling, not as carpenter, but before the mast. I shipped on board the old ——, one of Gale's of Deptford. We took in some Shetlanders at Lerwick, as whalers mostly do, as hardy chaps as any afloat; but one of them died before we'd left Ronas Head a month. He was a strange, silent fellow, that was always looking over his shoulder in the forecastle at night, as if he expected to see something. We chaffed him about it at first, but he wasn't a safe man to plague. His mates told us all kinds of queer yarns about him; that he'd been away from the Islands for ever so long, and that nobody knew where he'd been to. All that *he'd* say was that he'd been in the 'Spanish service,' and some made out that that meant a slaver, some a pirate, some one thing, some another; but none of them any good. The Shetlanders don't mind smuggling, but they are quite a pious people in the main, and they didn't relish the way in which this man cursed and swore, and was for ever sneering at the kirk. He struck a minister one day when he'd got the horrors, and the parson had gone to look after him; saying, 'that he didn't want any spies about his bed.' His eyes were staring at the wall on one side of him, as if some one was standing there. They *said* that he had got the horrors; but, as I've told you, he had always that frightened look in the dark, even when he was quite sober. Something bad was on his mind, that's very certain.

"The day he died he was queerer than ever, keeping out of the way of every body as much as he could, rolling his eyes about like a madman, talking to himself, and as pale as a sheet. 'You'd better turn in, Galt,' the doctor said to him; and down he went without a word, and presently the doctor sent him some stuff, thinking he was in a fever. My bunk was next to his, and when I turned in at eight bells I could hear him hissing through his clenched teeth, just as if he was trying to keep in a shriek. It was much such a night as this, only there was a deal more ice ranging about than what we've seen. I soon fell asleep, for we had been making-off blubber all day, and I had got quite tired over the casks. I might have been asleep about a couple of hours, when I was woke by a horrid scream—as if a soul was just dropping into the lower regions. I tumbled out in next to no time, and so did the other chaps, and we all came crowding round Galt's berth. He was squeezed up against the side (we could see, when we lifted up the lantern) as if he wanted to drive his back into the wood, and was striking out with his right hand clutched as if he'd got a knife in it, and his left with all the fingers spread out. His face was a horrid sight. It was as white and as wet as the side of a chalk-pit, and his eyes were regularly alight with rage and fear. I don't know which there was most of in them.

"'Take her off! take her off!' he yelled, when he saw us. 'You won't! won't you, you villains? Then, confound you, go to blazes with me! I'll haunt you, and sink the ship!'

"And then his face gave a twitch like a devil trying to laugh, and he fell over on it dead, with his arms still stiff. We could hardly get them down by his sides without breaking them. The next day but one we buried him, and—you may believe me or not, as you like—but I can tell you that his body didn't *drop* into the sea, but was *dragged* down the moment he touched the water.

"The first slack day afterward the skipper had his chest brought up, and tried to sell his things; but none of us would bid; so the skipper and the doctor, like good fellows, bid against each other, to get a good round sum for his old mother, whom *he'd* never cared about, his mates told us. *We* didn't bid, because we didn't think it would be lucky to put on any thing that such a man as he had worn; but we made out a list of what each of us would give to the old girl, and gave it to the skipper to be stopped out of our pay.

"Nevertheless, after that we had nothing but misfortunes. Next to no fish came in sight. Scarce one of those that did come could we get near; and when we happened to strike one, the line was sure to break. One of the boats, too, went down all of a sudden, just as if it had been swallowed. Galt was haunting us, sure enough. We didn't see any thing of him, however, until the sun set for good. We were lying then, frozen up, in a great floe, some sixty miles northwest of the Devil's Thumb. We could just make it out when the sun dipped—not to come up again for weeks to come. There we were, fairly shut in for the whole winter. Well, we were sawing out a dock for the ship by moonlight, when suddenly—the bears had done growling, and the wolves howling, for a bit, and every thing except the grating saws was still as death, for there wasn't a breath of wind blowing—all of a sudden, I say, we heard shrieks and laughing. We knocked off work, and ran aboard in a minute—we were so scared; and when we ventured to look over the bulwarks, there, about two miles off, we could see the boat's crew we had lost rushing through the mist, as big as giants, and Galt after them, even bigger, striking out just as he did when he died.

"Another time, we made out some water a mile off, with a whale floundering about in it, as if she was puzzled how to get out. We launched the boats over the ice, gave chase, and killed her, and towed her alongside the floe to flinch. We were glad enough of the crang ourselves, for we had been on short allowance for a long time. The bears and the wolves and the blue foxes scented it, and came down for their share. We drew off a bit to let them come near, and then let fly and killed a lot of them, too, for food. We had made quite a jolly pile of provisions, and were just about to spear an old shark—fried shark doesn't taste unlike fried sole, when you're hungry—that was bumping the whale with its ugly snout, to find a tid-bit, when crack went the ice, like a monstrous big pane of glass, with a running rumble like the roar of a thousand cannon let off one after another. We could hear it growling away for miles into the darkness. The moon was just going down. The shark soon left the whale, for the bit of ice on which our prog was tilted over like a dust-cart, and shot its load into the sea. We were too busy looking after our lives to have any time to look after that. Two of our four boats were cracked like walnut-shells by the big lumps of ice that were jolting about every where. It was as much as ever we could do to get off our lump safely—the four crews into two boats; it danced up and down, this side and that, like a cork upon the swell. And then we had only starlight to guide us as we pulled back to the ship, with broken ice on every side threatening each moment to stave us in. I didn't see *him* that night, but three of our fellows did. They say he chased us back, jumping from block to block as if they were only stepping-stones across a brook.

"He was seen once more big like that. The ship was frozen in hard and fast again. You could see nothing but a hummocky plain of ice, with here and there a berg sticking up like a sharp horn, for miles all round, except in one place astern, where there was a little water-hole that glimmered in the moonlight like a great watching eye. We had covered in the quarter-deck with a sloping canvas roof, but a hole was left just above the taffrail to look out from. Well, one night, when the Northern Lights were flashing about the sky like huge flapping flags of red, and yellow, and green, one of the boys was looking out through this opening, and by the water-hole he saw Galt standing as tall as a fir-tree. He had the fingers and the thumb of his left hand spread out as he had when he died, and with his right forefinger he counted them off one by one. Then down he went into the water-hole as the play-actors drop through the stage, and the next morning it was frozen up.

"On the night of the fourth day after he had been thus seen he was seen again, the same size as he was when alive, walking round and round the ship, laughing and pointing. One, two, three, four, he counted on his left hand, then shut it all up except the little finger, and kept lunging through the gloom with that. We knew what he meant next day.

"A berg twice as high as the one we saw at noon came with a jar against the floe, and shivered it for miles. The ice about the ship, of course, broke up and began a devil's dance; but as the bits weren't very big, and she was regularly cased with rope-fenders, she might have got over that if the berg hadn't borne down upon her as straight as if it had been steered. On it came, never once falling off a point. You may fancy what a funk we were in! We bundled clothes and blankets, pork and biscuit into the boats, and were over the side in a twinkling, pulling for dear life, and fending off the little lumps that came walloping up against us as well as we could with the boat-hooks. Two poor frost-bitten fellows couldn't leave their berths, and the skipper swore, come what might, he'd stick by the ship. We saw him run forward and hoist the jib all by himself, to get some way on her, and then the berg came between, and we never saw any more of him or the poor old ——. And may I never taste grog again if I didn't see on the berg, alongside of Galt and a foreign-looking woman, the—"

Whom he saw, and how Chips and his comrades got home, we did not hear; for just then a shrill voice from the forecastle—echoed shrilly along the deck—sang out, in tremulous haste, "Ice on the weather-bow!" and the chief officer, in his rushing route forward, put in his snow-roofed visage at the cabin-door, and bellowed to his colleague, "Jackson, turn out!" The cabin was soon cleared, and we saw the monster solemnly glide past us, so near that we could plainly make out the foam of the black billows breaking on its dully glimmering sides.

HUMORS OF THE DAY.

A beautiful blue-eyed Lulu of my acquaintance who has seen five summers is very fond of a friend of her father's, a young and promising lawyer. He is frequently absent from home in attendance upon courts in counties adjoining his own. Lulu, knowing this, one day said, "Mother, Mr. L. is all the time going to court; why don't he bring his wife home with him?"

When Bishop Leighton was one day lost in meditation in his own sequestered walk at Dunblane, a fair young widow came up to him, and told him it was ordered that he should marry her; for she had dreamed thrice that she was married to him. "Very well," replied the bishop, "whenever I shall dream thrice that I am married to you, I will let you know, and we will be married immediately."

How to Get Rid of Contribution.—Tight Fist, who sat next us in church not long since, showed us his plan to get rid of a contribution. When the box came round he commenced fumbling with desperate energy in his cassimeres—the deacon waited and Tight Fist fumbled and dug into the depths of his trowsers as if after his very boots. At length the box got tired of delay and passed to the next. Tight Fist leisurely folded his fingers, twirled his thumbs, and leaned over and asked us if we got the idea. Got it perfectly.

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